

جواهر ثمينة من القرآن

PRECIOUS GEMS FROM THE QUR'AN

Tafseer of selected verses from the Noble Qur'an

from Taysir al-Karim ar-Rahman Fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan

by Shaykh 'Abdur-Rahman ibn Nasir as-Sa'di رحمه الله

Dar PDFs

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

إن الحمد لله، نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره، ونعوذ بالله من شرور أنفسنا، ومن سيئات أعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له، ومن يضلل فلا هادي له، وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له، وأشهد أن محمدًا عبده ورسوله

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴾

[آل عمران: ١٠٢]

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴾ [النساء: ١]

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا * يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴾

[الأحزاب: ٧٠-٧١]

أما بعد: فإن أصدق الحديث كتاب الله، وخير الهدي هدي محمد ﷺ، وشر الأمور محدثاتها، وكل محدثة بدعة، وكل بدعة ضلالة، وكل ضلالة في النار

Preface

All praise and thanks be to Allah, and may blessings and peace be upon our Prophet ﷺ, his family, his companions, and those who support him and follow his guidance. To proceed:

This is a compilation of selected verses regarding various topics from the Noble Qur'an with the Tafseer of Shaykh 'Abdur-Rahman ibn Nasir as-Sa'di (may Allah have mercy on him) taken from *Taysir al-Karim ar-Rahman Fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan*. While reading the Book of Allah and the Tafseer of Imam as-Sa'di, there are several verses whose explanations we found to be gems. Therefore, we compiled and arranged them, hoping this would be a concise and easy explanation of selected verses to benefit the reader.

Many may find it challenging to read *Taysir al-Karim ar-Rahman Fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan* due to its length, as well as *Tayseer al-Lateef al-Manaan*. However, this compilation differs from *Tayseer al-Lateef al-Manaan* in that it is a compilation of selected verses regarding various topics with their explanations taken from *Taysir al-Karim ar-Rahman Fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan*. The translation of the Tafseer was taken from Tafseer as-Sa'di (International Islamic Publishing House).

We ask Allah the Exalted to bring about benefit by way of this book, to attach our hearts to the Book of Allah, to raise us by way of it, to make it a proof for us and not against us, and to make us from the people of the Qur'an.

قال الله تعالى

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ

أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا

[محمد : ٢٤]

**Will they not then ponder on
the Qur'an, or are there locks
on their hearts?**

[Surah Muhammad 47:24]

Table of Contents

The Basmalah	18
1. Surah al-Fatihah (1)	20
2. The first commandment and prohibition in the Qur'an [al-Baqarah 2:21-22]	26
3. The superiority of Adam over the angels [al-Baqarah 2:30-34] ..	30
4. The Jews and the Christians will never be pleased with you until you follow their religion [al-Baqarah 2:120]	33
5. We have made of you an Ummah justly balanced [al-Baqarah 2:143]	35
6. Those to whom We gave the scripture know the Prophet as they know their own sons [al-Baqarah 2:146]	39
7. Remember Me; I will remember you. Give thanks to Me, and do not be ungrateful. [al-Baqarah 2:152]	41
8. Seek help through patience and prayer; for Allah is with those who are patient. [al-Baqarah 2:153]	44
9. To Allah we belong, and to Him is our return. [al-Baqarah 2:155-157]	47
10. What is righteousness? [al-Baqarah 2:177]	52
11. Fasting is prescribed to you so you may become pious [al-Baqarah 2:183]	59

12. When My slaves ask you concerning Me, I am indeed close to them; I answer the call of the caller. [al-Baqarah 2:186] 61
13. An accepted Hajj brings no less a reward than paradise [al-Baqarah 2:197] 63
14. Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the hereafter, and protect us from the torment of the fire [al-Baqarah 2:201] 64
15. The greatest verse in the Qur'an (Ayat-ul-Kursi) [al-Baqarah 2:255] 66
16. The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the cause of Allah... [al-Baqarah 2:261] 71
17. Those who consume usury (riba) will not stand on the Day of Resurrection except like a madman [al-Baqarah 2:275] 73
18. When you contract debts among yourselves... [al-Baqarah 2:282-283] 75
19. Allah does not place on any soul a burden greater than it can bear [al-Baqarah 2:285-286] 87
20. Say [O Muhammad]: If you love Allah, then follow me. [Al 'Imran 3:31] 94
21. You will never attain righteousness until you spend in charity of that which you love [Al 'Imran 3:92] 96
22. O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims. [Al 'Imran 3:102-103] 98

23. A group of people from among you enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong [Al 'Imran 3:104]	102
24. Hasten towards forgiveness from your Lord [Al 'Imran 3:133-136]	105
25. Every soul will taste death [Al 'Imran 3:185]	110
26. Fear your Lord Who created you from a single soul [an-Nisa 4:1]	112
27. Men will have their reward and women will have their reward [an-Nisa 4:32]	115
28. Men are in charge of women [an-Nisa 4:34]	117
29. O you who believe, obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those of you who are in authority. [an-Nisa 4:59]	120
30. Whatever good befalls you is from Allah [an-Nisa 4:79]	123
31. If the Qur'an had been from anyone other than Allah, they would have found therein many contradictions. [an-Nisa 4:82] .	125
32. When the angels take the souls of those who have wronged themselves [an-Nisa 4:97-99]	128
33. Be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents or relatives. [an-Nisa 4:135]	132
34. Help one another in righteousness and piety, but do not help one another in sin and transgression. [al-Ma'idah 5:2]	136

35. This day I have perfected your religion for you [al-Ma'idah 5:3]	138
36. When you prepare for prayer, purify yourselves... [al-Ma'idah 5:6]	140
37. Allah will bring forth a people He will love and who love him [al-Ma'idah 5:54]	150
38. Those who have the most enmity towards the believers [al- Ma'idah 5:82-86]	153
39. Intoxicants, gambling, idols and divining arrows are an abomination. [al-Ma'idah 5:90-91]	157
40. Whoever Allah wills to guide, He opens his heart to Islam. [al- An'aam 6:125]	161
41. Verily, this is my path, so follow it. [al-An'aam 6:151-153]	163
42. Verily my prayer, my sacrifice, my living and my dying are all for Allah. [al-An'aam 6:162-163]	170
43. You approach men with lust instead of women; you are indeed a people transgressing beyond all bounds [al-A'raf 7:80-84]	172
44. To Allah belong the most beautiful names, so call on Him by them. [al-A'raf 7:180]	175
45. The true believers are only those who... [al-Anfal 8:2]	178
46. If you fear Allah, He will grant you a criterion [al-Anfal 8:29]	180

47. Sufficient for you is Allah [al-Anfal 8:64]	182
48. The eight categories of those who are entitled to Zakah [at-Tawbah 9:60]	183
49. The Muhajiroon, Ansar, and those who follow them. [at-Tawbah 9:100]	188
50. Give glad tidings to the believers [at-Tawbah 9:112]	190
51. There has come to you a Messenger from among yourselves [at-Tawbah 9:128]	193
52. The allies and close friends of Allah [Yunus 10:62-64]	195
53. Allah does not set right the work of the corruptors [Yunus 10:81]	197
54. Say O Muhammad: This is my way; I call to Allah on the basis of clear evidence... [Yusuf 12:108]	198
55. Verily Allah does not change the condition of a people until they themselves change [ar-Ra'd 13:11]	200
56. Those who believe and whose hearts are assured by the remembrance of Allah [ar-Ra'd 13:28]	201
57. Never think that Allah is unaware of what the evildoers are doing [Ibrahim 14:42-43]	203
58. Verily We have sent down the Qur'an and We will preserve it [al-Hijr 15:9]	205

59. We have sent down to you the Book explaining all things [an-Nahl 16:89]	207
60. Verily Allah enjoins justice, kindness and giving kinsfolk their due... [an-Nahl 16:90]	209
61. We will grant them a good life [an-Nahl 16:97]	211
62. Invite to the way of your Lord on the basis of wisdom and goodly exhortation [an-Nahl 16:125]	213
63. Verily this Qur'an guides to that which is most just and upright [al-Isra' 17:9]	215
64. Your Lord has ordained that you should worship none but Him and show kindness to parents [al-Isra' 17:23-24]	216
65. Do not approach fornication or adultery [al-Isra' 17:32]	219
66. We send down in the Qur'an that which is a healing and mercy for the believers [al-Isra' 17:82]	221
67. Benefits from the story of Moosa and al-Khidr [al-Kahf 18:60-82]	223
68. Say O Muhammad: I am but a human being like yourselves [al-Kahf 18:110]	235
69. 'Eesa said: Verily I am a slave of Allah. [Maryam 19:30-33]	237
70. O my Lord, increase me in knowledge. [Taha 20:114]	240
71. Whoever turns away from My Reminder will have a miserable life [Taha 20:124]	242

72. Allah will defend those who believe [al-Hajj 22:38]	243
73. O you who believe, bow and prostrate, and worship your Lord. [al-Hajj 22:77]	244
74. Those who will inherit al-Firdous and abide therein forever [al-Mu'minoon: 23:1-11]	246
75. They are the ones who hasten to do good deeds [al-Mu'minoon: 23:57-62]	252
76. The slanderous lie against the Mother of the Believers: 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) [an-Nur 24:11-26]	254
77. Tell the believing men to avert their gaze [an-Nur 24:30]	270
78. Tell the believing women to avert their gaze, not show their adornments, and draw their headcovers. [an-Nur 24:31]	273
79. Men who are not distracted by buying or selling [an-Nur 24:36-38]	278
80. The one who takes his own whims and desires as his god [al-Furqan 25:43-44]	280
81. The true slaves of the Most Gracious [al-Furqan 25:63-77]	282
82. The day when neither wealth nor sons will avail them; but only he who comes to Allah with a pure heart. [ash-Shu'araa 26:88-89]	297
83. Lower your wing in humility and gentleness to the believers [ash-Shu'araa 26:213-216]	298

84. Moosa and the two women [al-Qasas 28:25-28]	301
85. Lessons from the story of Moosa and Pharaoh [al-Qasas 28:1-51]	304
86. You cannot guide whomever you like, but Allah guides whomever He wills. [al-Qasas 28:56]	312
87. That which is with Allah is better and more lasting [al-Qasas 28:60]	314
88. Do people think that once they say: We believe, they will be left alone and not be tested? [al-Ankaboot 29:1-3]	316
89. Prayer keeps one away from obscenity and wickedness [al-Ankaboot 29:45]	318
90. Those who strive in Our cause, We will sure guide them to Our paths. [al-Ankaboot 29:69]	321
91. He created for you from among yourselves spouses [ar-Room 30:21]	323
92. Corruption and disorder have appeared on land and sea because of what people's hands have earned [ar-Room 30:41]	325
93. Luqman's advice to his son [Luqman 31:12-19]	327
94. The Prophet has a greater claim over the believers and is closer to them than their own selves [al-Ahzab 33:6]	338
95. Verily in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example [al-Ahzab 33:21]	340

96. O Prophet, say to your wives: If you seek the life of this world... [al-Ahzab 33:28-29] 342
97. Do not speak too softly, lest one in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire. [al-Ahzab 33:32-34] 345
98. Allah has prepared forgiveness and an immense reward for them [al-Ahzab 33:35] 349
99. O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is appropriate. [al-Ahzab 33:70-71] 352
100. You are in need of Allah, whereas Allah is Self-Sufficient. [Fatir 35:15] 354
101. Only those who have knowledge truly fear Allah [Fatir 35:28] 357
102. The inhabitants of paradise will be busy in their rejoicing on that day [Ya-Seen 36:55-58] 358
103. With them will be chaste women with big beautiful eyes who restrain their glances [as-Saafaat 37:40-49] 360
104. We have sent down to you the Book with the truth, so worship Allah with sincere devotion. [az-Zumar 39:1-2] 363
105. Are they equal, those who know and those who do not know? [az-Zumar 39:9] 365
106. Those who are patient will be rewarded abundantly without measure [az-Zumar 39:10] 367

107. O my slaves who have transgressed against themselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. [az-Zumar 39:53-54] 368
108. Call upon Me; I will answer your prayer. [Ghafir 40:60] 371
109. Verily those who say: Our Lord is Allah, then remain steadfast. [Fussilat 41:30-32] 372
110. Who is better in speech than one who calls people to Allah [Fussilat 41:33] 375
111. Repel evil with that which is good [Fussilat 41:34-35] 378
112. There is nothing like Him, and He is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing. [ash-Shuraa 42:11] 381
113. Whoever forgives and reconciles, his reward is with Allah. [ash-Shuraa 42:40] 383
114. If you help Allah's cause, He will help you. [Muhammad 47:7] 385
115. Know that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah [Muhammad 47:19] 386
116. Will they not then ponder on the Qur'an, or are there locks on their hearts? [Muhammad 47:24] 391
117. Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah [al-Fath 48:29] 393
118. If a wrongdoer (fasiq) comes to you with news [al-Hujurat 49:6] 397
119. The believers are but brothers [al-Hujurat 49:10] 399

120. Let not some ridicule others, for they may be better than them. [al-Hujurat 49:11]	401
121. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? [al-Hujurat 49:12]	404
122. We are closer to him than his jugular vein [Qaf 50:16-18]	407
123. True fear of Allah [Qaf 50:30-35]	409
124. The attributes of the righteous [adh-Dhariyaat 51:15-19]	411
125. Has there come to you the story of the honored guests of Ibraheem? [adh-Dhariyaat 51:24-37]	413
126. Continue to exhort them, for exhortation benefits the believers. [adh-Dhariyaat 51:55]	421
127. I have not created the jinn and humans except to worship Me [adh-Dhariyaat 51:56-58]	423
128. The Sunnah is revelation just like the Qur'an [an-Najm 53:1-4]	425
129. Is the reward of goodness anything but goodness? [ar-Rahman 55:60]	427
130. Know that the life of this world is nothing but play and distraction [al-Hadid 57:20]	428
131. He will give you a double portion of His mercy [al-Hadid 57:28]	432

- 132.** Allah will raise in status those of you who believe and those who have been given knowledge [al-Mujadilah 58:11] 434
- 133.** Whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and whatever he forbids to you, refrain from it. [al-Hashr 59:7] 436
- 134.** O you who believe, why do you say that which you do not do? [as-Saff 61:2-3] 437
- 135.** They want to extinguish Allah's light with their utterances, but Allah will perfect His light. [as-Saff 61:6-9] 439
- 136.** When the call to prayer is given on Friday [al-Jumu'ah 62:9-11] 445
- 137.** No calamity occurs except by Allah's leave [at-Taghabun 64:11-13] 449
- 138.** Verily among your spouses and your children are some that are enemies to you [at-Taghabun 64:14-15] 453
- 139.** Whoever fears Allah, He will grant him a way out from difficulty. [at-Talaq 65:2] 455
- 140.** Verily you are upon exalted character [al-Qalam 68:4] 456
- 141.** Stand up for the night prayer [al-Muzzammil 73:1-6] 459
- 142.** We feed you only for the sake of Allah; we seek of you neither recompense or thanks. [al-Insan 76:7-10] 461
- 143.** By the ten nights [al-Fajr 89:1-2] 463

144. We will make easy for him the path of salvation [al-Layl 92:5-10]	465
145. Truly with hardship comes ease [ash-Sharh 94:5-6]	467
146. They were enjoined only to worship Allah with sincere devotion to Him [al-Bayyinah 98:5-8]	469
147. Competition for worldly gain distracts you [at-Takathur 102:1-2]	472
148. Surah al-'Asr (103)	473
149. Surah al-Kawthar (108)	475
150. Surah al-Ikhlās (112)	477
151. Surah al-Falaq (113)	479
152. Surah an-Nas (114)	481

The Basmalah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

◆Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful} that is, I begin with every name of Allah (*Subhanahu wa Ta'ala* - Glorified and Exalted is He); this includes all the (beautiful) names of Allah.

{Allah} - He is the One Who is worshipped, the only One Who deserves to be worshipped, because of the divine attributes He has, which are attributes of perfection.

{the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful}. These two names indicate that He possesses great mercy that encompasses all things and includes all living beings, and He has decreed it for the pious, the followers of His Prophets and Messengers. Absolute mercy is for them; others have a share of it.

It should be noted that one of the basic principles on which the early generations of the *Ummah* and its leading scholars are agreed is belief in the names and attributes of Allah and how those attributes are manifested. For example, they believe that He is Most Gracious, Most Merciful; He possesses mercy that is one of His attributes and this mercy has an impact on His creation. So all types of blessings are signs of His mercy. The

same applies to all of His names. We may say concerning the All-Knowing that He has (unlimited) knowledge, by means of which He knows all things. Similarly, the All-Powerful is possessed of might and has power over all things.

(1) Surah al-Fatihah

قال الله تعالى

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ * الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ * مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ * إِيَّاكَ
نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ * اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ * صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ
أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ * غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ *

[سورة الفاتحة]

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds * The Most Gracious,
the Most Merciful * Master of the Day of Judgement * You
[alone] we worship, and You [alone] we ask for help * Guide
us to the straight path * The path of those whom You have
blessed * Not of those who have incurred Your wrath, nor of
those who have gone astray *

[Surah al-Fatihah]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{Praise be to Allah}. This refers to praising Allah for the attributes of perfection and for His actions that are based on generosity and justice. So to Him be perfect praise in all ways.

{the Lord of the worlds}. The Lord is the One Who sustains all creatures - which refers to all beings other than Allah - because He created them, granted them everything that they need and bestowed great blessings upon them; if they were

deprived of those blessings they would not be able to survive, for whatever blessings they enjoy come from Him.

He sustains His creation in two ways, general and specific:

- In general terms, this refers to His creation of all creatures, His granting of provision to them and His guiding them to that which is in their best interests, which enables them to survive in this world.

- In specific terms, it refers to His cherishing of His close friends, by means of instilling faith in their hearts, guiding them to it, perfecting it for them and warding off from them distractions and obstacles that come between them and faith. In real terms, this means guiding them to everything that is good and protecting them from everything that is bad. Perhaps it is for this reason that most of the supplications of the Prophets used the word Lord (*Rabb*), since all their requests and needs came under His special cherishing.

The phrase **{the Lord of the worlds}** indicates that He alone has the power to create, and He alone controls His creation, bestows blessings and is completely independent of means, whilst all of creation is dependent upon Him in all respects.

{Master of the Day of Judgement} The Master (*Malik*) is the one who possesses the attributes of sovereignty, one of the implications of which is that He enjoins and forbids, rewards and punishes, and controls His subjects in all ways. This sovereignty is connected to the Day of Judgement, which is the Day of

Resurrection, the day on which people will be judged on the basis of their deeds, both good and bad. On that day, His perfect sovereignty, justice and wisdom will become completely clear to His creation, and they will realize that created beings have no sovereignty at all. On that day, kings and subjects, slaves and free, will all be equal and will submit fully to His might, awaiting the reckoning, hoping for His reward and fearing His punishment. Hence this day is singled out for mention; otherwise, He is the Master of the Day of Judgement and of all other days.

{You [alone] we worship, and You [alone] we ask for help}
that is, we single out You alone to worship and ask for help. Putting the object at the beginning of the sentence conveys the meaning of exclusivity. In other words: we worship You, and we do not worship anyone other than You; we ask You for help and we do not ask anyone other than You for help.

Worship is mentioned before seeking help by way of mentioning what is general before what is specific, and also to give precedence to Allah's dues over those of His slaves.

Worship (*ibadah*) refers to everything that Allah loves and is pleased with of actions and words, both outward and inward. Seeking help refers to relying upon Allah when seeking to attain what is beneficial and ward off what is harmful, whilst trusting that one will attain that.

Worshipping Allah and seeking His help is the means of attaining eternal happiness and salvation from all evils; there is no other way of attaining salvation apart from doing these two things. True worship can only be that which is learned from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and done with the intention of seeking the pleasure of Allah. If it includes these two things, then it is worship. Seeking help is mentioned after worship, even though it is a part of worship, because in offering all types of worship the individual needs the help of Allah; if Allah does not help him, he will not attain what he wants to of fulfilling commands and heeding prohibitions.

{Guide us to the straight path} that is, show us and help us to follow the straight path, which is the clear path that leads to Allah and to His paradise, which in turn means knowing the truth and acting upon it. (This is a supplication) for guidance to the straight path and guidance when following the path. Guidance to the straight path means adhering to the religion of Islam and forsaking all other religions; guidance when following the path includes guidance concerning all the details of religion, in knowledge and action. This supplication is one of the most concise, comprehensive and beneficial of supplications. Hence it is obligatory to call upon Allah with it in every *rak'ah* of the prayer, because we are in need of that.

This straight path is **{The path of those whom You have blessed}**, namely the Prophets, *siddeeqeen* (strong and true in faith), martyrs and righteous people.

{not} the path **{of those who have incurred Your wrath}** those who came to know the truth but drifted away from it, such as the Jews and others like them; and not the path **{of those who have gone astray}**, those who drifted away from the truth because of ignorance and misguidance, such as the Christians and others like them.

Although this *soorah* is brief, it contains that which no other *soorah* of the Qur'an contains. It refers to the three types of *tawheed* (affirmation of the oneness of Allah). *Tawheed ar-Ruboobiyah* (affirmation of the oneness of the divine Lordship) is seen in the verse **{the Lord of the worlds}**. *Tawheed al-Uloohiyah* (affirmation of the oneness of divinity), which refers to worshipping Allah alone, is seen in the phrases **{Praise be to Allah}** and **{You [alone] we worship}**. *Tawheed al-Asma' was-Sifat* (affirmation of the oneness of the divine names and attributes), which means affirming that the attributes of perfection belong to Allah alone, which He ascribed to Himself and which His Messenger ﷺ affirmed, without denying the apparent meanings or likening Him to His creation, is seen in the word **{Praise}**, as discussed above.

It affirms prophethood in the words **{Guide us to the straight path}**, because that guidance is not possible without sending Messengers.

It affirms recompense for deeds in the words **{Master of the Day of Judgement}**, and tells us that the recompense will be on

the basis of justice, because this is the meaning of the word judgement.

It affirms the divine decree, and tells us that humans act on the basis of free will, which is contrary to the views of the *Qadaris* and *Jabaris*. In fact, it refutes all the followers of innovation [and misguidance] in the verse **{Guide us to the straight path}** because the straight path is knowing the truth and acting upon it, but everyone who follows innovation [and misguidance] does the opposite of that.

It speaks of being sincere towards Allah in terms of worship and seeking help, in the verse **{You [alone] we worship, and You [alone] we ask for help}**.

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

(2) The first commandment and prohibition in the Qur'an

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ
(٢١) الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشًا وَالسَّمَاءَ بِنَاءً وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً
فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنْدَادًا وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ
(٢٢)

[البقرة : ٢١-٢٢]

O mankind, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, that you may become righteous (21) [He] who made for you the earth a bed [spread out] and the sky a ceiling and sent down from the sky, rain and brought forth thereby fruits as provision for you. So do not attribute to Allah equals while you know [that there is nothing similar to Him]
(22)

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:21-22]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This is a general command that is addressed to all people, instructing them to worship Him in a comprehensive way by obeying the commands of Allah, heeding His prohibitions and believing in His words. Thus He commands them to do that for

which He created them, as He says: **{I have not created the jinn and humans except to worship Me} (adh-Dhariyat 51: 56)**

Then Allah tells us why it is obligatory to worship Him alone, for He is your Lord Who has bestowed upon you all kinds of blessings:

He created you after you were nothing, He created those who came before you and He bestowed upon you blessings both obvious and hidden. He made the earth a resting-place for you, on which you build structures for your benefit; He caused you to cultivate it and till it; He enabled you to travel from one place to another; and He granted you many ways of benefitting from it. He made the heavens an edifice for the earth on which you dwell, and He placed in it benefits that you need, such as the sun, moon and stars.

{and sent down rain from the heavens}. The word *sama'* (translated here as **{heavens}**) refers to anything that is above you. Hence the commentators said that what is meant by **{heavens}** (*sama'*) here is the clouds, from which Allah sends down rain.

{and brought forth therewith fruits} this may include other crops such as grains, dates and so on.

{as a provision for you}, to feed and sustain you so that you might survive by means of it and enjoy it.

{so do not set up rivals to Allah} that is, equals from among His creation which you worship as you should worship Allah and love as you should love Allah, as they are created beings like you who receive provision and are under His control, having not the slightest power either in heaven or on earth, and they cannot benefit or harm you at all.

{when you know better} that is, when you know that Allah has no partner or equal with regard to the power of creation, granting of provision or control of the universe, and He has no partner in worship.

So how can you worship other gods besides Him when you know these things? This is something that is very strange and extremely foolish.

This verse combines the command to worship Allah alone and the prohibition on worshipping anything other than Him. It offers clear evidence that it is obligatory to worship Him and that the worship of anything other than Him is invalid. This refers to *Tawheed ar-Ruboobiyah* (oneness of the divine Lordship), which implies that He is the only One Who creates, grants provision and controls. If anyone accepts that He has no partner in these things, then by the same token he should also accept that Allah has no partner in worship. This is the clearest rational evidence for the oneness of the Creator and the invalidity of associating partners with Him.

The words **{that you may become pious}** may be understood as meaning that if you worship Allah alone, then you will avoid His wrath and punishment, because you have taken measures to ward that off from yourselves. Or it may mean that if you worship Allah (alone), you will become one of the pious who are described as fearing Allah.

Both meanings are sound and complement one another. The one who worships Allah properly is one of the pious, and whoever is pious will be saved from the wrath and punishment of Allah.

(3) The superiority of Adam over the angels

قال الله تعالى

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا
مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ
قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ (٣٠) وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ
عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (٣١)
قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ (٣٢)
قَالَ يَآدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ
إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ
(٣٣) وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَى وَاسْتَكْبَرَ
وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ (٣٤)

[البقرة : ٣٠-٣٤]

And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority." They said, "Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we exalt You with praise and declare Your perfection?" He [Allah] said, "Indeed, I know that which you do not know." (30) And He taught Adam the names - all of them. Then He showed them to the

angels and said, "Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful." (31) They said, "Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knowing, the Wise." (32) He said, "O Adam, inform them of their names." And when he had informed them of their names, He said, "Did I not tell you that I know the unseen [aspects] of the heavens and the earth? And I know what you reveal and what you have concealed." (33) And [mention] when We said to the angels, "Prostrate before Adam"; so they prostrated, except for Iblees. He refused and was arrogant and became of the disbelievers. (34)

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:30-34]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

We learn several things from these verses, which confirm that Allah spoke and that He still speaks; He says whatever He wills and He speaks as He wills; and He is All-Knowing, Most Wise.

We also learn that if the wisdom behind some of the things that Allah creates and some of the things that He commands is hidden to us, what we must do is surrender to Him, assume that it is our reasoning that is flawed, and affirm the wisdom of Allah.

In these verses, we also see how Allah cared about the angels and showed kindness to them by teaching them that which they did not know and pointing out to them that of which they were not aware.

These verses also teach us the virtue of knowledge, from several angles:

For example, Allah highlighted His knowledge and wisdom to His angels, and He highlighted to them the superiority of Adam, which was based on his knowledge; knowledge is the best characteristic that a person may have; and Allah commanded the angels to prostrate to Adam as an honor to him, when his superiority in knowledge became clear to them.

From this passage we also learn that it is important to test others (by asking them questions first, before giving the answers, instead of giving away information freely); if they are unable to answer when tested, then the one who is superior in terms of knowledge should tell them. This is more effective in proving the point.

We also learn from the contrast between the fathers of humanity and of the *jinn*; the superiority of Adam; the way in which Allah honored him; the enmity of Iblees towards him; and other lessons.

(4) The Jews and the Christians will never be pleased with you until you follow their religion

قال الله تعالى

وَلَنْ تَرْضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَىٰ
اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ وَلَئِنْ أَتَبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بَعْدَ الَّذِي جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا
لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ

[البقرة : ١٢٠]

The Jews and the Christians will never be pleased with you until you follow their religion. Say: Verily the guidance of Allah is the [only] guidance. If you were to follow their desires after the knowledge that has come to you, then you would have neither protector nor helper against Allah.

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:120]

◆ **Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:**

Here Allah tells His Messenger ﷺ that the Jews and Christians will never be pleased with him unless he follows their religion, because they call people to the religion which they themselves are following, claiming that it is truth. So say to them: **{Verily the guidance of Allah}** with which I have been sent **{is the [only] guidance}**.

With regard to what they are following, it is whims and desires, based on the fact that Allah then says: **{If you were to follow their desires after the knowledge that has come to you, then you would have neither protector nor helper against Allah}.**

This represents stern instructions not to follow the whims and desires of the Jews and Christians, or to imitate them in that which is exclusive to their religions. Although this is addressed to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, his *Ummah* is also included in that, because what matters is the general application of the verse, regardless of whom it specifically addresses, just as what matters is the general meaning of the text, not the specific reason for which it is given.

(5) We have made of you an Ummah justly balanced

قال الله تعالى

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ
الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ
يَتَّبِعُ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ
هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِلَّ إِيْمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَّءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

[البقرة : ١٤٣]

Thus We have made of you an Ummah justly balanced, that you might be witnesses over humankind, and the Messenger might be a witness over you; and We prescribed the qibla towards which you used to face, only in order to know those who would follow the Messenger from those who would turn on their heels. It was indeed difficult, except for those whom Allah guided. Allah will never let your faith go to waste, for Allah is to all people Most Compassionate, Most Merciful.

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:143]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

In this verse, Allah mentions the means of guidance for this *Ummah* in general terms and how Allah blesses this *Ummah*, then He says:

{Thus We have made of you an Ummah justly balanced} that is, following a moderate and just way. Anything other than the moderate middle way comes under the heading of extremes that are subject to prohibition. So Allah has made this *Ummah* justly balanced in all matters of religion and justly balanced with regard to belief in the Prophets, so that they do not go to extremes in veneration, as the Christians did, or in disrespect, as the Jews did. The Muslims believe in all the Prophets in an appropriate manner. They also follow a moderate middle way with regard to laws, avoiding the strictness and restrictions of the Jews and the lenience of the Christians.

With regard to matters of purification and food, the Muslims are not like the Jews, whose prayers cannot be valid unless they are offered in their synagogues, and whom not even water can purify from impurities. Good things were forbidden to them, as a punishment. And they are not like the Christians, who do not regard anything as impure or forbid anything; rather they permitted (as food) anything that walks or crawls on the face of the earth.

The Muslims' way of purification is the most perfect and complete; Allah has permitted to them good things in the area of food, drinks, clothing and marriage, and He has forbidden to them whatever is impure in those areas. Hence this *Ummah* has the most perfect religion, the best manners, and the most virtuous deeds.

Allah has bestowed upon them knowledge, forbearance, justice and kindness that He did not bestow upon any other nation. Hence they are **{an Ummah justly balanced}**, that is a perfect community to be **{witnesses over humankind}**. Because of their justice and fair ruling, they pass judgement between people of other religions, but no one else passes judgement on them. Whatever the *Ummah* testifies is acceptable should be accepted; whatever they testify is unacceptable should be rejected. If it is asked: how can they pass judgement on others when the testimony of each disputant is unacceptable to the other? The response is that rather the view of one of the disputants will not be acceptable, because there is the suspicion of bias, but when this suspicion is not present and there is complete justice, as is the case with this *Ummah*, then it is acceptable, because what matters is passing judgement on the basis of justice and truth, the condition of which is knowledge and justice, which are both present in this *Ummah*. Therefore, its judgement is to be accepted.

If anyone has any doubts about the virtue of this *Ummah*, and wants someone to testify in its favor, the one to do that is the most perfect of Allah's creation, their Prophet ﷺ, hence Allah says: **{and the Messenger might be a witness over you}**.

One aspect of the testimony of this *Ummah* over others is that on the Day of Resurrection, when Allah asks the Messengers whether they conveyed the message, and He asks the nations who rejected them whether they received the message or not,

and they deny that the Prophets conveyed the message to them, the Prophets will ask this *Ummah* for testimony, and its Prophet ﷺ will speak in its favor (so that its testimony might be accepted).

This verse also indicates that the consensus of this *Ummah* constitutes definitive proof, and that they are protected from error, because Allah describes them as **{justly balanced}**. If we were to assume that they agreed upon error, they could not have been described as justly balanced, except in a few issues. Because Allah says **{that you might be witnesses over humankind}**, this implies that if they testify on a particular matter that Allah has permitted it, forbidden it or made it obligatory, then they cannot be wrong.

We also learn from this verse that issuing verdicts, testifying, giving *fatwas* and so on are things that can only be accepted from people of good character, those who are **{justly balanced}**.

(6) Those to whom We gave the scripture know the Prophet as they know their own sons

قال الله تعالى

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

[البقرة : ١٤٦]

Those to whom We gave the scripture know him [the Prophet] as they know their own sons; but some of them conceal the truth knowingly.

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:146]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah tells us that it was well established among the People of the Book, and they knew, that Muhammad ﷺ was the Messenger of Allah and that what he brought was truth; they were as certain of that as they were certain of their own sons, who they would not confuse with anyone else. Their knowledge of Muhammad ﷺ was of such a level that there could be no doubt or confusion about it at all.

But some of them - in fact the majority of them - who disbelieved in him concealed this testimony knowingly, despite that certainty. **{And who does greater wrong than those who**

conceal a testimony they have received from Allah} (2: 140).

This provided consolation to the Messenger ﷺ and the believers, and warned them about the evil and specious arguments of these people. But some of them did not knowingly conceal the truth, some of them believed in him, and some disbelieved in him out of ignorance.

The one who has knowledge is obliged to disclose the truth, explain it and make it attractive to people with whatever means he can of eloquence, proof, examples and so on. He must also show falsehood to be false, distinguish it from the truth, and make it look displeasing and unattractive, with whatever means he can. Those who conceal the truth did the opposite of what they were commanded to do, which had a negative impact on their character and attitude.

(7) Remember Me; I will remember you. Give thanks to Me, and do not be ungrateful.

قال الله تعالى

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ

[البقرة : ١٥٢]

Therefore, remember Me; I will remember you. Give thanks to Me, and do not be ungrateful.

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:152]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Hence Allah says: **{Therefore, remember Me; I will remember you}**. Here Allah commands us to remember Him, and He promises the best of rewards for that, which is that He remembers those who remember Him. The Messenger ﷺ has told us in a *hadith qudsi* that Allah says:

«Whoever remembers Me to himself, I will remember him to Myself; whoever remembers Me in a gathering, I will remember him in a gathering better than it.» (at-Tirmidhi)

Allah tells us that the best of *dhikr* (remembrance of Him) is that which occurs simultaneously in the heart and on the lips. This is the *dhikr* that leads to increased knowledge of Allah and love for Him, and brings a greater reward. *Dhikr* is the essence of

gratitude, hence He enjoins it in particular, then follows that with the command to show gratitude in general, as He says: **{Give thanks to Me}** that is, for these blessings that I have bestowed upon you, and because I have warded off from you all sorts of harm. Gratitude may be in the heart, which means affirming and acknowledging the blessings; it may be on the lips, in the form of *dhikr* and words of praise; or it may take the form of physical actions such as obeying Allah, submitting to His commands and avoiding that which He has forbidden. By means of gratitude, the existing blessings will continue, and further blessings will be added to them. Allah says: **{...If you give thanks, I will surely give you more...}** (Ibraheem 14: 7)

In these two verses, Allah instructs us to give thanks after receiving the spiritual blessings of knowledge, purification and learning good manners, as well as being helped to do good deeds, and He tells us that this is the greatest of blessings; in fact, it is the real blessing that will last after other blessings vanish. The one who is guided and enabled to acquire knowledge or do good deeds should give thanks to Allah for that, so that He may increase His blessings to them and so as to ward off self-admiration. So they should busy themselves with giving thanks.

Because the opposite of gratitude is ingratitude, Allah forbids its opposite and says: **{and do not be ungrateful}**. What is meant by ingratitude here is the opposite of gratitude; it is ingratitude for and denial of blessings, and the failure to appreciate them and fulfil one's duties with regard to them. It

may be understood as being general in meaning, hence ingratitude is of many types, the most serious of which is disbelief in Allah, then sins of different types, such as associating others with Allah and sins that are less serious than that.

(8) Seek help through patience and prayer; for Allah is with those who are patient.

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

[البقرة : ١٥٣]

O you who believe, seek help through patience and prayer; for Allah is with those who are patient.

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:153]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah commands the believers to seek help in their religious and worldly affairs **{through patience and prayer}**. Patience means controlling oneself in the face of that which one dislikes. That is of **three** types: **(1)** patience in obedience to Allah, so that you will do it; **(2)** patience in refraining from disobedience to Allah, so that you will not do it; **(3)** and patience in accepting the decree of Allah when it is hard, so that you will not resent it.

Patience is a great help in all matters, and there is no way for one who is not patient to achieve his goals, especially with regard to acts of worship that are difficult and are to be done regularly, because they require a great deal of patience to bear the hardship involved. If the one who does these acts of worship adheres to patience, he will attain success, but if he is deterred

by difficulty and hardship, and does not have the patience to persist in these acts of worship, he will not achieve anything, and he will be deprived.

Similarly, the sin for which one has a strong inclination and which is within one's means is something that cannot be resisted except by means of great patience, resisting one's inclination for the sake of Allah and by seeking Allah's help to protect one from it, for it is one of the greatest temptations and is also a very difficult test, especially if it is ongoing. In such cases willpower and physical strength grow weak, and it may lead to resentment, unless one resists it by means of patience for the sake of Allah and puts one's trust in Him, turning to Him and expressing one's constant need for His help.

Therefore, we know that patience is something that people need; in fact, they are in desperate need of it in all situations. Hence Allah has enjoined it and tells us that He is **{with those who are patient}** that is, He is with those for whom patience is second nature. He is with them in the sense of helping and guiding them, thus hardships and difficulties become easy for them, they become able to cope with any serious matter and nothing is difficult for them. This kind of 'being with' is indicative of Allah's love, help, support and closeness, and it is a great privilege that is bestowed upon those who are patient. If those who are patient did not have any virtue other than the fact that Allah is with them, that would be sufficient honor for them. As for 'being with' in a general sense, it means that Allah is with us

by His knowledge and power, as Allah says: {...He is with you wherever you may be...} (al-Hadeed 57: 4) This is general in meaning and applies to everyone.

Allah enjoins seeking help through prayer because prayer is the foundation of the faith and the light of the believers; it is the connection between the slave and his Lord. If a person's prayer is complete, including every obligatory and *sunnah* action, and it is done with the presence of mind that is its essence, when the individual begins to pray, feeling that he is indeed standing before his Lord, standing like a well-disciplined slave, focusing on everything that he says and does, fully immersed in conversing with his Lord and calling upon Him, then this prayer is most certainly one of the greatest helps in all one's affairs. Prayer restrains one from shameful and evil acts, because this focus in prayer will lead him to comply with the commands of his Lord and heed His prohibitions. This is the prayer through which Allah has enjoined us to seek help in all our affairs.

(9) To Allah we belong, and to Him is our return.

قال الله تعالى

**وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ
وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ (١٥٥) الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا
لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ (١٥٦) أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ (١٥٧)**

[البقرة : ١٥٥-١٥٧]

**We will certainly test you with something of fear and hunger,
and loss of property, lives and crops, but give glad tidings to
those who patiently persevere (155) Who say, when afflicted
with calamity: To Allah we belong, and to Him is our return
(156) They are the ones on whom blessings and mercy from
their Lord are [bestowed], and they are the ones who are
guided (157)**

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:155-157]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah tells us that He will inevitably test His slaves with all sorts of trials and tribulations, in order to distinguish the sincere from the liars, and the impatient from the patient. This is His way with His slaves, because if times of ease were to persist

for people of faith, without any trials, it would not be clear who is who, and that would lead to mischief.

The wisdom of Allah dictates that good people should be distinguished from bad people. The purpose of tests is not to cause the believers to lose their faith or turn away from the religion, for Allah will not let the faith of the believers go to waste. But in this verse He tells us that He will test His slaves **{with something of fear}** of their enemies **{and hunger}**. That is, He will test them with a little of these things, because if He tested them with extensive fear or hunger, they would be destroyed, but the purpose of tests is to purify, not to destroy.

{and loss of property} - this includes everything that may befall wealth and property, such as vermin, drowning and other types of loss, or the seizing of wealth by evildoers, such as unjust rulers, bandits and the like.

{lives} that is, loss of loved ones such as children, relatives and friends. It also includes various kinds of diseases that may affect the individual or one of his loved ones.

{and crops} that is, grains and the fruits of palm trees and other kinds of trees and plants, because of intense cold, hail, burning, plagues of locusts and so on.

These things will inevitably happen, because the All-Knowing, All-Aware has told us of it, and it happened as He foretold. When it happens, people respond in one of two ways, either impatience or patience.

The one who is impatient suffers two calamities: the loss of what he loves, which is the calamity that he has been stricken with, and loss of something greater than that, which is the reward for obeying Allah's command to be patient. Thus he incurs loss and deprivation of reward and whatever he has of faith decreases. He misses out on patience, acceptance and gratitude, and he becomes resentful, which is indicative of a lack of faith.

As for the one whom Allah enables to be patient when calamities occur, he controls himself and stops himself developing any resentment that could be reflected in his words or deeds. He seeks reward for it from Allah, and he knows that the reward he will attain for his patience is greater than the calamity that has befallen him. In his case, the calamity turns into a blessing, because it becomes a means of attaining something better and more beneficial for him than what he lost. So he obeys the command of Allah and earns reward.

Hence Allah says: **{but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere}** that is, give them the glad tidings that they will be rewarded without measure.

Those who are patient are those who attain these great glad tidings and immense gifts. Then Allah describes them thus: **{who say, when afflicted with calamity}** - calamity is anything that causes mental anguish or physical harm, or both, such as the things mentioned above. **{To Allah we belong}** that is, Allah

owns us and we are under His control; we have no control over our own selves and property at all. If we are tested with regard to some of it, then the Most Merciful has decreed something concerning His slaves and their property as He wills, so there should be no objection to Him. Rather it is part of being a true slave of Allah (*uboodiyah*) to realize that the calamity has been decreed by the Sovereign, the Most Wise, Who is more merciful to him than he is to himself. This gives him a sense of contentment and acceptance of Allah's decree, which makes him grateful to Allah for decreeing for His slave that which is good for him, even if he does not realize it.

In addition to the fact that we belong to Allah, we will return to Him on the Day of Resurrection, when He will requite each person in accordance with his deeds. So if we show patience and seek reward, we will find our reward waiting for us with Him, but if we are impatient and resentful, our share will be nothing but resentment and the loss of reward. Knowing that we are slaves of Allah and will return to Him is among the greatest means of attaining patience.

{They} that is, the ones who have this characteristic of patience as described above **{are the ones on whom blessings and mercy from their Lord are [bestowed]}** that is, His praising them and highlighting their high status. His mercy is great; by His mercy towards them, He enables them to be patient, by virtue of which they will attain a perfect reward. **{and they are the ones who are guided}** and who know the truth; they know that they

belong to Allah and that they will return to Him, so they act accordingly, thus showing patience for the sake of Allah.

This verse indicates that the one who is not patient will have the opposite of what they have. This implies that he is condemned by Allah and will be punished; it is also indicative of misguidance and loss. How great is the difference between the two types of people; how little is the trouble that the patient may have to bear, and how great is the trouble that the impatient will face.

These two verses refer to training oneself to deal with calamity before it happens, so as to make things easier when it does happen; they also tell us what his response should be when calamity strikes, which is to be patient, how to help oneself develop patience, and what those who are patient will have of reward. We also learn that the situation of one who is impatient is the opposite of the situation of one who is patient.

These trials and tests have been Allah's way with those who have gone before, and you will find no change in Allah's way (33: 62).

(10) What is righteousness?

قال الله تعالى

لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ
ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَءَاتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى
حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي
الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا
وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ

[البقرة : ١٧٧]

It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards east or west; rather righteousness is to believe in Allah and the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the Prophets; to spend from your wealth, despite your love for it, on kinsfolk, orphans, the needy, wayfarers and those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to establish prayer and give zakah; to fulfil the covenants you make; to be patient in the face of hardship and adversity, and in times of conflict. Such are the true believers, and such are the pious.

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:177]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards east or west} that is, this is not the righteousness that is expected from people, therefore discussing it at length and arguing about it is a kind of effort that only leads to division and dispute. This is similar to the words of the Prophet ﷺ:

«The strong man is not the one who wrestles others to the ground; rather the strong man is the one who controls himself when he is angry.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

{rather righteousness is to believe in Allah} that is, that He is one God, He possesses all the attributes of perfection and is far above all shortcomings.

{and the Last Day} This refers to everything that Allah has told us in His Book, or that the Messengers have told us, of what happens after death.

{the angels} whom Allah has described to us in His Book, and His Messenger ﷺ has also described.

{the Book} this refers to all the Books that Allah sent down to His Messengers, the greatest of which is the Qur'an. Thus we believe in all that it contains of stories and rulings

{and the Prophets} in general, and especially the last and best of them, Muhammad ﷺ.

{to spend from your wealth} this refers to everything that an individual may possess of wealth, whether it is great or small. What is meant is giving

{despite your love for it} that is, love of wealth. Here Allah highlights the fact that wealth is something that people love and find it hard to give to others.

If a person gives of his wealth, despite his love for it, in order to draw closer to Allah, this is indicative of his faith. Part of giving one's wealth despite one's love for it is to give charity when one is healthy and inclined to be stingy, hoping to become rich and fearing poverty. Similarly, giving charity when one does not have much is better, because in this situation one may want to keep it because of what is expected of need and poverty. It is also better to give what is precious and what one loves of one's wealth, as Allah says: **{You will never attain righteousness until you spend [in charity] of that which you love...}** (Al Imran 3: 92) All of those who do these things are among those who give their wealth despite their love for it.

Then Allah tells us of those on whom it is to be spent, who are the most deserving of your kindness, such as **{kinsfolk}**, those whose joys and sorrows you share; they are the ones who support one another and help one another to pay the *diyah* (blood money) if need be. It is the best and most proper of righteousness to take care of kinsfolk by spending on them and

speaking kindly to them, according to how closely they are related and the extent of their need.

{orphans} who have no breadwinner and do not have the strength to be independent of means. This highlights to us Allah's mercy towards His slaves, and shows us that He is more merciful to them than a father to his child, because Allah has enjoined His slaves, and made it obligatory for them, to spend some of their wealth on those who have lost their parents, so that they be equal to those who have not lost their parents. Moreover, as the reward matches the nature of the deed, whoever shows mercy towards the orphans of another, mercy will be shown to his orphan (if he dies).

{the needy} this refers to those whose are subdued by need and humiliated by poverty. They have rights over the rich, so as to ward off or reduce their need; hence the rich should give as much as they can afford.

{wayfarers} the wayfarer is the stranger who is cut off in a foreign land. Allah encourages His slaves to give him some of their wealth in order to help him on his journey, because he is most likely in need of help and has a great deal of expenses. Hence the one on whom Allah has bestowed the blessings of living comfortably in his homeland and so on should show compassion towards his brother who is a stranger, and help him in whatever way he can, even if that is by giving him food or a

means of transportation, or protecting him from any wrongdoing that may befall him, and so on.

{and those who ask}. They are the ones who are faced with some troubles or desperate need which dictate that they should go and ask for help, such as one who has to pay for damage caused accidentally or has to pay a tax that has been imposed by the authorities. This also applies to one who asks people for donations for the maintenance of public utilities, such as mosques, schools, bridges and the like; such a person has the right to ask even if he is rich.

{and for the ransom of slaves} this includes manumission and helping others with it; giving money to a *mukatib* (slave with a contract of manumission) so that he can pay off his master; ransoming captive Muslims from the disbelievers; and paying ransoms in the case of those who are being held by evildoers.

{to establish prayer and give zakah}. We have seen above that Allah often mentions prayer and *zakah* together because they are the best acts of worship, for they are spiritual, physical and financial. By means of them a person's faith and certainty may be evaluated.

{to fulfil the covenants you make}. A covenant means fulfilling that which Allah has made binding or that which one has made binding upon oneself. That includes all the rights of Allah, which Allah has enjoined upon His slaves so that they have become binding and form part of the covenant, hence they are

obliged to fulfil them. It also includes the rights of other people that Allah has enjoined upon them, and the obligations that an individual takes upon himself, such as oaths, vows and so on.

{to be patient in the face of hardship} that is, poverty, because the poor man needs patience in many ways, as he is going through ongoing psychological distress and physical pain that no one else is going through. When he sees rich people enjoying that which is beyond his means, he feels distress. When he or his dependents go hungry, he feels distress. If he eats food that does not suit him (because he cannot afford anything else), he feels distress. If he goes naked or almost naked, he feels distress. When he thinks of his current situation and what he expects to face in the future, he feels distress. When faced with cold that he cannot ward off, he feels distress. All of these and similar calamities he is enjoined to face with patience, seeking reward with Allah and hoping for it.

{and adversity} — this refers to sickness of all types, including fever, injuries, stomach ailments and pain in any part of the body, even toothache or aching fingers and so on. He needs to have patience in facing all of these things, because he feels weak and helpless and is suffering physical pain that is very difficult to bear, especially when it goes on for a long time. So he is enjoined to be patient and to seek reward with Allah.

{and in times of conflict} that is, times of fighting enemies whom we are enjoined to fight, because engaging in physical

fighting is very difficult, and a person may fear being killed, injured or captured. So in this situation he needs to be patient and seek reward with Allah, hoping for reward from Allah, from Whom come the help and victory that He has promised to those who are patient.

{Such} that is, those who have the characteristics mentioned above, such as correct belief, and good deeds that are the result and proof of faith, and good manners that reflect the dignity of the individual and the essence of true humanity - such people are **{the true believers}** who are sincere in their faith because their deeds are a confirmation of that faith.

{and such are the pious} because they have given up what is forbidden and have done what is enjoined, and these qualities inevitably include all good characteristics; fulfilling covenants includes all Islamic teachings.

The acts of worship mentioned in this verse are the greatest acts of worship, and the one who does them is more likely to do others. Such are the righteous people who are sincere and pious.

We know what Allah has connected to these matters of reward in this world and in the hereafter, but this is not the place to discuss that in detail.

(11) Fasting is prescribed to you so you may become pious

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

[البقرة : ١٨٣]

**O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was
prescribed to those who came before you, that you may
become pious.**

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:183]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah tells us of the blessings that He has bestowed upon His slaves by enjoining them to fast as He enjoined it upon previous nations, because it is one of the laws and commands that are in the best interests of people in all times.

This verse also offers encouragement to this *Ummah*, that they should compete with others in striving to do perfect deeds and hastening to acquire righteous qualities; this is not something too burdensome which they have been singled out to do.

Then Allah tells us of the wisdom behind the prescription of fasting, as He says **{that you may become pious}**. Fasting is one

of the greatest means of developing piety, because it involves obeying the command of Allah and avoiding that which He has forbidden.

Part of the piety that fasting involves is that the fasting person refrains from that which Allah has forbidden to him of food, drink, intercourse and so on, to which he is naturally inclined, seeking thereby to draw closer to Allah, hoping for His reward by giving up these things. This is part of piety. Piety also includes the following:

- The fasting person trains himself to remember that Allah is always watching, so he gives up things that he desires even though they may be available to him, because he knows that Allah is watching him.
- Fasting narrows the pathways of the *Shaytan*, who flows through the son of Adam like blood. Fasting weakens the *Shaytan's* influence and reduces sins.
- The fasting person usually does many acts of worship and obedience, which are characteristics of piety.
- By fasting, the rich man feels the pain of hunger, which makes him inclined to help the poor and destitute. This is also a characteristic of piety.

(12) When My slaves ask you concerning Me, I am indeed close to them; I answer the call of the caller.

قال الله تعالى

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ
فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ

[البقرة : ١٨٦]

When My slaves ask you concerning Me, I am indeed close [to them]; I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me. So let them respond to Me, and believe in Me, that they may be rightly guided.

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:186]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This is the answer to a question. Some of his Companions asked the Prophet ﷺ: O Messenger of Allah, is our Lord close to us so that we may whisper to Him or is He far away so that we should call out to Him? Then the words **{When My slaves ask you concerning Me, I am indeed close [to them]}** were revealed, because Allah is Ever-Watchful, Witness (to everything); He can see what is secret and what is yet more hidden; He knows even the most stealthy glance of the eyes and all the secrets that hearts conceal. He is also close to the one who calls upon Him,

in the sense that He is quick to respond. Hence He said: **{I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me}**.

Calling or supplication (*du'a*) is of **two** types: **(1)** supplication of worship and **(2)** supplication of asking.

Allah's closeness is of **two** types: **(1)** closeness to all of His creation by His knowledge and **(2)** closeness to those who worship Him and call upon Him by responding, helping, and guiding.

Whoever calls upon his Lord with focus and presence of mind, offering supplication as prescribed in Islam, with no impediment to receiving a response to his supplication - such as consuming *haram* wealth or *haram* food, and so on - then Allah has promised to answer him, especially if he fulfils the conditions of supplication which are responding to Allah by obeying His commands and heeding His prohibitions in word and deed, and having faith that makes a response inevitable.

Hence He says: **{So let them respond to Me, and believe in Me, that they may be rightly guided}** that is, so that they will be guided to believe and do righteous deeds, which will rid them of errors that are contrary to faith and righteous deeds. Faith in Allah and responding to His commands are the means of attaining knowledge, as Allah says: **{O you who believe. If you fear Allah, He will give you the insight to distinguish between right and wrong...}** (al-Anfal 8: 29)

(13) An accepted Hajj brings no less a reward than paradise

قال الله تعالى

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَاتٌ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ
وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ وَمَا تَفَعَّلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ
الزَّادِ التَّقْوَى وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ

[البقرة : ١٩٧]

The Hajj takes place in the well-known months. Whoever undertakes to perform Hajj during them, there should be no lewdness, nor wrongdoing, nor quarrelling during the Hajj. And whatever good you do, Allah knows it. And take provision [with you] for the journey, but the best of provisions is piety. So fear Me, O people of understanding.

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:197]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

The purpose of *Hajj* is humility before Allah, seeking to draw close to Him by means of whatever acts of worship one can do, and keeping away from sin; in this way one's *Hajj* will be accepted, and an accepted *Hajj* brings no less a reward than paradise.

(14) Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the hereafter, and protect us from the torment of the fire.

قال الله تعالى

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

[البقرة : ٢٠١]

But there are others who say: Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the hereafter, and protect us from the torment of the fire.

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:201]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

The good that is sought in this world includes everything that is liked by people, such as abundant and enjoyable *halal* provision, a righteous wife, a child who is a source of joy, ease and comfort, beneficial knowledge, righteous deeds and other things that are liked and are permissible.

The good that is sought in the hereafter is safety from punishment in the grave, during the standing (on the Day of Resurrection) and in hell; attaining the good pleasure of Allah and eternal bliss; and being close to the Most Merciful Lord. Hence this supplication is the most perfect and comprehensive

of supplications, and the most appropriate for the believers. Hence the Prophet ﷺ often recited this supplication and encouraged others to do likewise.

(15) The greatest verse in the Qur'an (Ayat-ul-Kursi)

قال الله تعالى

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ مَا فِي
السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا
بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ
وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ
الْعَظِيمُ

[البقرة : ٢٥٥]

Allah: there is no god but He, the Ever-Living, the Self-Sustaining and All-Sustaining. Neither slumber nor sleep overtake Him. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth. Who is there that can intercede with Him except by His leave? He knows what was before them and what will be after them, while they encompass nothing of His knowledge except what He wills. His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of both does not weary Him, for He is the Most High, the Most Great.

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:255]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This verse is the greatest, best and most sublime verse in the Qur'an, because of what it points to of important matters and divine attributes. Hence there are many *hadiths* that recommend reciting it regularly at different times, morning and evening, when going to sleep and following the prescribed prayers.

In it, Allah tells us about Himself that **{there is no god but He}** that is, there is none deserving of worship except Him, for He is the true God to Whom all types of worship, obedience and devotion should be directed, because of His perfection, the perfection of His attributes and His great blessings.

And it is befitting that the human being should be a slave to his Lord, following His commands and heeding His prohibitions. Everything other than Allah is false and worship of anything other than Him is false, because everything other than Allah is created, imperfect, under His control and dependent (on Him) in all ways, so it does not deserve to be worshipped in any way.

{the Ever-Living, the Self-Sustaining and All-Sustaining} these two divine names inherently imply all the other divine names. The Ever-Living (*al-Hayy*) is the One Who has perfect life, which implies all attributes of His essence, such as hearing, sight, knowledge, power, and so on. The Self-Sustaining and All-Sustaining (*al-Qayyoom*) is the One Who is self-sustaining and Whom others need to exist. This implies all the actions of the

Lord of the worlds, Who does whatever He wills of rising above, descending, speaking, creating, granting provision, giving life and death, and all types of control. All of that is included in the concept that He is Self-Sustaining and the Sustainer of others.

Hence some of the scholars said that these two are the greatest names to which, if Allah is called upon by them, He will respond, and if He is asked by them, He will give.

The perfect nature of His being Ever-Living, Self-Sustaining and All-Sustaining means that **{Neither slumber nor sleep overtake Him}**. The word translated here as **{slumber}** implies drowsiness.

{To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth} that is, He is the Sovereign, and everything other than Him belongs to Him. He is the Creator, the Provider, the Controller, and everything other than Him is created, provided for and controlled; it does not possess for itself or for anyone else the weight of an atom in the heavens or on earth. Hence Allah says: **{Who is there that can intercede with Him except by His leave?}** That is, no one can intercede with Him without His permission. All intercession belongs to Allah, but when He wants to show mercy to whomever He will among His slaves, He gives permission to whomever He wants to honor among His slaves to intercede for him. The intercessor does not initiate intercession before permission is given.

{He knows what was before them} that is, what is past of all things **{and what will be after them}** that is, what lies ahead in the future. His knowledge encompasses all details, past and future, apparent and hidden, seen and unseen. People have no control over their affairs at all, and they do not have the slightest knowledge except that which He has taught them. Hence He says: **{while they encompass nothing of His knowledge except what He wills}**.

{His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth}. This is indicative of His perfect might and all-encompassing power, as the *Kursi* encompasses the heavens and the earth, despite their vastness and the greatness of what they contain. The *Kursi*, however, is not the greatest of Allah's creation; rather there is something that is greater than it, namely the Throne (*al-'Arsh*) and that which no one knows except Him. The greatness of these creations dazzles the mind and is beyond comprehension; it causes the mountains to crumble and cannot be grasped by even the most brilliant of human minds. So how about the greatness of their Creator and Initiator, Who instilled in them many wonders and mysteries that point to His great wisdom, the One Who keeps a firm hold on the heavens and the earth, lest they fall apart (35: 41), without becoming tired or weary? Hence He says **{and the preservation of both does not weary Him}** that is, it is not burdensome for Him.

{for He is the Most High} in and of Himself, above His Throne; He is the Most High in the sense that He is the Subduer

of all His creation, the Most High in status, because of the perfection of His attributes.

{the Most Great}; the might of tyrants appears insignificant when compared with His greatness, and the status of powerful kings appears small when compared with His Majesty. Glory be to the One Who is possessed of great power and might over all things.

This verse refers to the oneness of divinity (*Tawheed al-Uloohiyah*), the oneness of the divine Lordship (*Tawheed ar-Ruboobiyah*) and the oneness of the divine names and attributes (*Tawheed al-Asma' was-Sifat*). It also refers to His all-encompassing sovereignty and knowledge, and to the greatness of His power, majesty, glory, might and pride, and His exaltedness above all His creation. This verse on its own highlights belief in the names and attributes of Allah, and implies all the beautiful names and sublime attributes of Allah.

(16) The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the cause of Allah...

قال الله تعالى

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنبُلَةٍ مِائَةُ حَبَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

[البقرة : ٢٦١]

The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the cause of Allah is that of a grain of corn that produces seven ears, each ear bearing a hundred grains. Allah gives manifold increase to whomever He wills. And Allah is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing.

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:261]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This is an explanation of the multiplication of reward mentioned previously: **{Who is he that will lend to Allah a goodly loan, so He will multiply it for him manifold?} (2: 245).** Here Allah says: **{The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the cause of Allah}** that is, they spend it in obedience to Him, seeking His pleasure. The most important kind of spending is spending on *jihad* for His sake.

{is that of a grain of corn that produces seven ears, each ear bearing a hundred grains}. What is meant by this example is to give a likeness of that multiplication, so that a person may form a mental picture of it, by means of which his faith will be strengthened and he will be motivated to spend in the hope of attaining that multiplied reward and great blessing.

{Allah gives manifold increase} which is this multiplication of reward **{to whomever He wills}** that is, according to the giver's condition and level of sincerity, and how beneficial and appropriate the spending is. And it may be that Allah will multiply the reward even further for **{whomever He wills}**, giving without limit.

{And Allah is All-Encompassing} in His generosity, so He gives abundantly and His giving does not deplete what He has. No one who spends (for His sake) should think that this multiplication of reward is a kind of exaggeration, because nothing is too much for Allah, and this giving does not decrease His resources, no matter how great it is. At the same time, He is **{All-Knowing}**; He knows who is deserving of that multiplied reward and who is not, so He multiplies appropriately in accordance with His perfect knowledge and wisdom.

(17) Those who consume usury (riba) will not stand on the Day of Resurrection except like a madman

قال الله تعالى

**الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ
مِنَ الْمَسِّ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبَا وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ
وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا فَمَنْ جَاءَهُ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِ فَانْتَهَىٰ فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُ
إِلَى اللَّهِ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ**

[البقرة : ٢٧٥]

Those who consume usury will not stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except like a madman who is being beaten by the Shaytan. That is because they say: Trade is like usury; but Allah has permitted trade and forbidden usury. Therefore, he who desists because of the admonition that has come to him from his Lord may keep his past gains; his case is for Allah [to judge]; but those who return to it will be inhabitants of the fire; they will abide therein forever.

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:275]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah tells us of the bad end and hardship that those who consume usury will face: they will not rise from their graves

on the Day of Resurrection to stand **{except like a madman who is being beaten by the Shaytan}**. So they will rise from their graves confused and shaky, as if they are drunk, expecting a severe punishment. That is because they thought and said: **{Trade is like usury}**. Such a statement would only come from one who is very ignorant or one who ignores what he knows out of stubbornness. So Allah will requite them in an appropriate manner, and they will become like insane people.

It may be understood from the words **{[they] will not stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except like a madman who is being beaten by the Shaytan}** that when they lost their minds in seeking to earn through usury, they became very foolish and unable to think properly. Their appearance and movements will be like those of insane people, with a complete lack of coordination and loss of rational thinking.

Allah says, responding to them and explaining His great wisdom: **{but Allah has permitted trade}** because it serves the public interest and there is a great need for it, and because prohibiting it would cause great harm. This is the basis for the permissibility of all ways of earning money, unless there is a text to indicate that something is not permitted. **{and forbidden usury}** because of what it entails of wrongdoing and evil consequences.

(18) When you contract debts among yourselves...

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ بِدَيْنٍ إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاكْتُبُوهُ وَلْيَكْتُبَ بَيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌ بِالْعَدْلِ وَلَا يَأْبَ كَاتِبٌ أَنْ يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ فَلْيَكْتُبْ وَلْيُمْلِلِ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ وَلَا يَبْخَسْ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا فَإِنْ كَانَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ سَفِيهًا أَوْ ضَعِيفًا أَوْ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يُمِلَّ هُوَ فَلْيُمْلِلْ وَلِيُّهُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَاسْتَشْهِدُوا شَهِيدَيْنِ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَامْرَأَتَانِ مِمَّن تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشُّهَدَاءِ أَنْ تَضِلَّ إِحْدَاهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَى وَلَا يَأْبَ الشُّهَدَاءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا وَلَا تَسْمُوا أَنْ تَكْتُبُوهُ صَغِيرًا أَوْ كَبِيرًا إِلَى أَجَلِهِ ذَلِكُمْ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَادَةِ وَأَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَرْتَابُوا إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً حَاضِرَةً تُدِيرُونَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَلَّا تَكْتُبُوهَا وَأَشْهِدُوا إِذَا تَبَايَعْتُمْ وَلَا يُضَارَّ كَاتِبٌ وَلَا شَهِيدٌ وَإِنْ تَفَعَّلُوا فَإِنَّهُ فُسُوقٌ بِكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ (٢٧٢) وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ وَلَمْ تَجِدُوا كَاتِبًا فَرِهْنِ مَّقْبُوضَةً فَإِنْ أَمِنَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا فَلْيُؤَدِّ الَّذِي أُؤْتِمِنَ أَمْنَتَهُ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ وَمَنْ يَكْتُمْهَا فَإِنَّهُ ءِثْمٌ قَلْبُهُ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ (٢٨٣)

[البقرة : ٢٨٢-٢٨٣]

O you who believe! When you contract debts among yourselves for a stated period of time, write it down. Let a scribe write it down faithfully between you. No scribe should refuse to write, as Allah has taught him, so let him write, and let the one incurring the debt dictate, and let him fear Allah his Lord, and not diminish [the debt] at all. If the debtor is feeble-minded or incapacitated, or unable himself to dictate, then let his guardian dictate faithfully, and call to witness two men from among you; if two men are not available, then a man and two women, such as you choose, to act as witnesses, so that if one of them forgets, the other can remind her. The witnesses should not refuse when they are summoned. Do not be reluctant to write down your debts, whether small or large, together with the time of repayment; that is more equitable in the sight of Allah, more reliable as evidence, and more likely to prevent doubts among yourselves. But if it is a transaction which you carry out on the spot among yourselves, there is no blame on you if you do not write it down. Have witnesses present whenever you trade with one another, and let neither scribe nor witness suffer harm, for if you did cause them harm, it would be wickedness on your part. So fear Allah, for it is Allah Who teaches you. And Allah has full knowledge of all things (282) If you are on a journey, and cannot find a scribe, then something should be handed over as collateral. But if you trust one another [and there is no need for collateral], let the one who is trusted fulfil his trust,

and let him fear Allah his Lord. Do not conceal testimony, for whoever conceals it has a sinful heart. And Allah is well aware of all that you do (283)

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:282-283]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

(2: 282) This is the verse of debt, which is the longest verse in the Qur'an. It contains important rulings which are of great benefit and value.

These rulings are as follows:

- 1.** All types of dealings that are based on credit or otherwise are permissible, because Allah tells us about dealings based on credit that the believers engaged in, in a manner that is indicative of approval and lays out guidelines concerning them. This indicates that they are permissible.
- 2.** In the case of credit, there must be a deadline for delivery.
- 3.** It is essential that the deadline be specified and known; it cannot be specified that delivery will be immediate or that the deal is open-ended.
- 4.** It is enjoined to put in writing all types of dealings that are based on credit. Doing so is either obligatory or recommended, and writing it down is essential because without putting it in writing, there is a great risk of problems such as mistakes, forgetting, disputes and quarrels.

5. The scribe should be instructed to write.
6. He should be a person of good character for his writing to be reliable, because what is said or written by an evildoer is not reliable.
7. He should write it down faithfully between them, and not be biased in favor of one of them because of ties of kinship or friendship and the like.
8. The scribe should know how to write documents and all that is required of each party in a particular case. He should also know how to make the document binding, because there is no other way to be fair and just. This is understood from the words: **{Let a scribe write it down faithfully between you}**.
9. If there is a document (of debt) in the handwriting of one who is known to be faithful or fair, as mentioned, it should be relied upon, even if he and the witnesses have died.
10. The words **{No scribe should refuse to write}** mean: no one whom Allah has blessed by enabling him to learn how to write should refuse to write down (a contract) between a debtor and creditor. Just as Allah has shown kindness to him by causing him to learn, he should treat kindly the slaves of Allah who need his writing, and he should not refuse to write for them.
11. The scribe should be instructed not to write anything but what the one who owes the debt dictates to him.

12. The one who dictates to the scribe should be the one who owes the debt.

13. He should be instructed to disclose everything that he owes, and not diminish (the debt) at all.

14. If someone admits that he owes something to someone else, it is to be accepted, because Allah instructed the one who owes the debt to dictate to the scribe. When the admission of debt is put in writing, what he has admitted of debt becomes binding, even if he claims after that that he made a mistake or forgot.

15. If there is any person who owes debts to others and there is proof of the amount and how great or small it is, and whether payment is due now or later, his statement is to be accepted and not the statement of the one to whom it is owed, because Allah told him not to diminish (the debt), yet his statement concerning the amount owed and the terms of repayment is to be accepted.

16. It is forbidden for the one who owes the debt to diminish it or reduce it in terms of its quantity and quality, or the timescale of repayment, and other factors.

17. The one who is unable to dictate the debt because he is too young, feebleminded, unable to speak and so on, can appoint his guardian to dictate on his behalf and admit the debt.

18. The guardian is obliged to be faithful and fair just as the debtor himself is enjoined to be, and he should not diminish the debt, because Allah says **{faithfully}**.

19. Good character on the part of the guardian is essential, because dictating faithfully as mentioned cannot be done by an evildoer.

20. Guardianship in financial matters (that is, doing business on behalf of another) is valid.

21. The debt is owed by the minor or by the one who is feeble-minded, insane or incapacitated; it is not owed by the guardian.

22. Acknowledgement of the debt by the minor or the person who is feeble-minded, insane, mentally challenged and so on, and their transactions, are not valid, because Allah has given their guardian the authority to dictate, and He did not give them any authority therein, out of compassion and mercy towards them, lest their wealth be lost.

23. The guardian's handling of the wealth of the people mentioned is valid.

24. This verse shows that it is prescribed for a person to learn everything that each party to a transaction needs to know in order to document it and preserve his rights, because the aim here is to document the transaction, provide proof and guarantee equity. That which is essential in order to achieve what is prescribed is also prescribed.

25. Acquiring literacy is prescribed; in fact, it is a communal obligation, because Allah has enjoined the writing down of debts and other matters, which cannot be achieved except by learning.

26. It is enjoined to have contracts witnessed. This is recommended, because the aim behind it is to protect people's rights, which serves their interests. If the one who is carrying out the transaction is acting on behalf of another, such as the guardian of an orphan or the caretaker of an endowment (*waqf*) and other cases in which recording transactions is essential, then having it witnessed becomes obligatory.

27. The minimum number of witnesses in financial transactions and so on is two men or a man and two women. The *Sunnah* indicates that one witness, accompanied by the oath of the claimant, is also sufficient.

28. The testimony of boys is not acceptable, because the verse specifically mentions men.

29. The testimony of women on their own concerning financial transactions and the like is not to be accepted, because Allah did not accept women's testimony unless it is accompanied by that of a man.

30. The testimony of an adult male slave is acceptable just like the testimony of a free man, because of the general meaning of the words **{and call to witness two men from among you}**, and an adult slave is one of our men.

31. The testimony of the disbelievers, whether they are male or female, is not acceptable, because they are not of us and because testimony should be based on good character, and they are not of good character.

32. This verse indicates that men are superior to women, and that the testimony of one man is equal to that of two women, because men have good memories and women do not.

33. If someone forgets his testimony, then remembers it later on, his testimony is still to be accepted, because Allah says: **{the other can remind her}**.

34. From the meaning of this verse it may be understood that if a witness is afraid of forgetting his testimony with regard to the dues of others, then he must write it down, because that which is essential to fulfilment of an obligatory duty is also obligatory.

35. If a witness is summoned and has no excuse, it is not permissible for him to refuse, because Allah says: **{The witnesses should not refuse when they are summoned}**.

36. If a person's testimony will not be acceptable, then it is not obligatory for him to respond if he is summoned, because there is no benefit in his doing so, and he is not counted as a witness.

37. It is not allowed to be reluctant or find it too burdensome to write down debts every time, whether they are great or small, and to write down the time of payment, and all the other conditions and restrictions in the contract.

38. This verse highlights the wisdom behind the prescription to write down contracts and have them witnessed, which is that it **{is more equitable in the sight of Allah, more reliable as evidence, and more likely to prevent doubts among yourselves}**. It guarantees fairness and justice, on which the well-being of people and the country is based. Testimony accompanied by written documentation is more proper and better, and further removed from doubt, suspicion, disputes and quarrels.

39. From this it may be understood that if a person is uncertain about his testimony, he has no right to give it; rather he must be certain of his testimony.

40. The words **{But if it is a transaction which you carry out on the spot among yourselves, there is no blame on you if you do not write it down}** indicate that there is a concession allowing people not to write it down if it is a transaction on the spot in which there is a hand to hand exchange, because there is no great need to write it down.

41. Although there is a concession allowing people not to write down transactions conducted on the spot, it is still prescribed to call witnesses, because Allah says: **{Have witnesses present whenever you trade with one another}**.

42. It is prohibited to harm the scribe by calling him at a time when he is busy and it is difficult for him to attend.

43. It is also prohibited to harm witnesses by calling them to witness or give testimony when they are ill or busy and it is too difficult for them to attend, and so on. This is based on the words **{and let neither scribe nor witness suffer harm}**. However, this phrase may also be understood as meaning "and let neither scribe nor witness cause harm" to the one to whom the debt is owed, by refusing or demanding too high a fee, and so on.

44. The above may mean that the scribe should not cause any harm (to the lender).

45. It may also mean that the witness should not cause any such harm either.

46. Doing these forbidden actions is a characteristic of wickedness, because Allah says: **{for if you did cause them harm, it would be wickedness on your part}**.

47. Attributes such as wickedness, faith, hypocrisy, enmity, faithfulness and so on may be partial characteristics (that is, not an individual's main characteristic). Thus a person may have some element of wickedness and the like, and he may also have some element of belief or disbelief, because Allah says: **{it would be wickedness on your part}** and He did not say, "you would be wicked."

48. The witness should be of good character, because Allah says: **{such as you choose, to act as witnesses}**.

49. The definition of good character is to be based on what people regard as good character in every place and time. Whoever is regarded by people as being of good character is to be accepted as a witness.

50. Based on this, the testimony of one whose character is not known should not be accepted until he is proven to be of good character.

These rulings are what may be derived from this verse according to the best of my limited knowledge. Allah has further wisdom and subtle reasons, understanding of which He grants to whomever He will.

(2: 283) That is, if you are travelling **{and cannot find a scribe}** to write down the deal between you and document it **{then something should be handed over as collateral}** that is, the lender should take possession of it, to keep it as security until he is repaid. This indicates that collateral that is not handed over does not serve as security. It also indicates that if the one who gives collateral and the one who receives it differ concerning the amount for which the collateral is given, the lender is the one whose word is to be accepted, the reason being that Allah has ordained collateral instead of writing down in order to secure the loan for the lender. If the word of the one who is keeping the collateral was not acceptable with regard to the amount for which it was left with him, then it would not serve the purpose. As the aim of collateral is to secure loans, it is acceptable when

travelling and when not travelling. Allah only mentioned travelling here because it is more likely to be needed in that situation when there is no scribe available. All of this applies in the case of a lender who wants to have some security regarding his loan. But if the lender trusts the borrower and wants to deal with him without collateral, then the one who owes him must pay back in full, and should not transgress against him or diminish the value of what he owes him.

{and let him fear Allah his Lord} in paying back what he owes and showing kindness to the one who trusted him.

{Do not conceal testimony} because rights that cannot be proved otherwise are based on it, so concealing it is a grave sin, because it is failing to do his duty of stating the facts, and it results in the lender losing what is due to him. Hence Allah says: **{for whoever conceals it has a sinful heart. And Allah is well aware of all that you do}**. This verse includes these rulings through which Allah has guided His slaves, which are based on great wisdom and serve great purposes. This indicates that if people followed Allah's guidance in these rulings, their affairs, both worldly and spiritual, would be in the best shape, because these rulings lead to justice and that which is in the Muslims' best interests; rights would be protected, quarrels and conflicts would be prevented, and peaceful relations between people would be guaranteed. To Allah be praise such as befits His majesty and might; we cannot praise Him enough.

(19) Allah does not place on any soul a burden greater than it can bear

قال الله تعالى

ءَامَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ ۚ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِاللّٰهِ
وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ ۚ وَكُتُبِهِ ۚ وَرُسُلِهِ ۚ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْ رُّسُلِهِ ۚ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا
وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ (٢٨٥) لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا
وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِن نَّسِينَا أَوْ
أَخْطَأْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إَصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا
وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ ۚ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ
مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ (٢٨٦)

[البقرة : ٢٨٥-٢٨٦]

The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the believers. Each [of them] believes in Allah, His angels, His Books, and His Messengers. We make no distinction between one and another of His Messengers. And they say: We hear, and we obey. Grant us Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the return [of all] (285) Allah does not place on any soul a burden greater than it can bear. For it is what it has earned, and against it is what it has committed. Our Lord, do not hold us accountable if we forget or fall into

error. Our Lord, do not lay on us a burden like that which You laid on those who came before us. Our Lord, do not lay on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Pardon us, forgive us and have mercy on us; You are our Protector, so help us against the disbelieving people (286)

[Surah al-Baqarah 2:285-286]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

(2: 285) Here Allah tells us about the faith, submission and obedience of the Messenger ﷺ and the believers who were with him, and their asking Him for forgiveness. He tells us that they believe in Allah, His angels, His Books and His Messengers. This implies belief in everything that Allah has told us about Himself or that His Messengers have told us about Him, namely the attributes of His perfection and majesty, in brief and in detail, as well as the declaration that He is above being likened to His creation and is above any denial of His attributes and above all shortcomings.

It also implies belief in the angels who are referred to in the texts in general terms and in detail, as well as belief in all the Messengers and Books. That in turn implies belief in everything that the Messengers have told us and everything contained in the Books of stories, commands and prohibitions. They (the believers) do not differentiate between any of His Messengers; rather they believe in all of them because they are all

intermediaries between Allah and His slaves, so disbelief in one of them is disbelief in all of them, and is in fact disbelief in Allah.

{And they say: We hear} what You have enjoined upon us and what You have forbidden to us

{and we obey} You in that, and we are not of those who say: We hear and disobey.

Because people will inevitably fall short with regard to the rights of Allah and thus are in need of His forgiveness all the time, they say:

{Grant us Your forgiveness} that is, we ask You for forgiveness for what we have done of shortcomings and sins, and to erase our faults **{and to You is the return [of all]}** that is, all creatures will return to You and You will requite them for what they have done of good or evil.

(2: 286) When Allah revealed the words **{Whether you disclose what is in your minds or conceal it, Allah will call you to account for it}** **(2: 284)**, the Muslims were distressed by it because they thought that they would be called to account for whatever entered their minds of persistent or passing thoughts. So in this verse, Allah told them that He does not place on any soul a burden greater than it can bear; in other words, (whatever burden He places upon an individual) is within his capability and He does not overburden him or make things too difficult for him. Allah says elsewhere: **{...He has not imposed any hardship on you in religion...}** **(al-Hajj 22: 78)**

In principle, the commands and prohibitions are not too difficult for people to adhere to; rather they are nourishment for the soul, a remedy for the body and protection from harm. Allah enjoined these things for His slaves out of mercy and kindness, yet despite that, if something is too hard to adhere to for some reason, He grants concessions to make it easier, by waiving it either completely or partially, as in the case of the concessions made for those who are sick or travelling, and so on.

Then Allah tells us that each soul will be rewarded for what it did of good, and whatever it did of evil will be counted against it; no soul will carry the burden of another and no one's reward will be given to someone else. The word which is translated here as **{earned}** (*kasaba*) flows more easily on the tongue, which indicates that doing good is easier and takes less effort, and as soon as a person forms the intention to do good, the reward begins. On the other hand, the word translated here as **{committed}** (*aktasaba*) is more difficult to say, which indicates that doing evil is not recorded against an individual unless he actually makes the effort to do it.

As Allah has told us about the faith of the Prophet ﷺ and the believers who were with him, and that each person will be requited for his actions, and that man will inevitably fall short, make mistakes and forget, He then tells us that He does not place on us any burden greater than what we can bear. He also tells us of the supplication of the believers to that effect. The Prophet

ﷺ told us that Allah said: "I have done that," in response to this supplication.

{Our Lord, do not hold us accountable if we forget or fall into error}. The difference between the two is that forgetting occurs when one becomes absent-minded about what he is instructed to do, so he fails to do it because he forgot it. Error occurs when a person aims to do something that is permissible, then the result of his action is not permissible. Allah has pardoned this *Ummah* for whatever they fall into of these two things, out of mercy and kindness towards them.

Based on that, if a person prays wearing a stolen or unclean garment, or he forgot about some impurity that was on his body, or he talks during the prayer because he forgot, or if he does something that breaks the fast because he forgot, or he does one of the actions that are forbidden when in *ihram* but does not involve killing an animal (this refers to hunting, which is forbidden when in *ihram* and for which a compensatory sacrifice must be offered), because he forgot, he is forgiven for that. By the same token, the one who swore an oath not to do something is not regarded as having broken his oath if he does the thing he swore not to do because he forgot. Similarly, if a person kills someone accidentally or destroys property accidentally, there is no sin on him; rather he is liable and must offer some compensation because of the results of his action, not because of his sin. Similarly, if a person forgets to mention the name of

Allah at times when he should mention His name, it does not matter.

{Our Lord, do not lay on us a burden} that is, difficult responsibilities **{like that which You laid on those who came before us}**. And Allah answered this supplication, as He granted concessions to this *Ummah* in matters pertaining to purification and different acts of worship, which He made easier in a way that he did not do for other nations.

{Our Lord, do not lay on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear}. Allah has answered this supplication also; to Him be praise.

{Pardon us, forgive us and have mercy on us}. Pardon and forgiveness are acts by means of which one may ward off evil and harm; mercy is that by virtue of which one attains well-being in all one's affairs.

{You are our Protector} that is, You are our Lord, Sovereign and God, Whose protection and care for us have never faltered since You created us and formed us. Your blessing is constantly bestowed upon us at every moment of our lives. Moreover, You have bestowed upon us a great blessing and marvelous gift, namely the blessing of Islam to which all other blessings are secondary. So we ask You, O our Lord and Sovereign, to complete Your blessing by helping us against the disbelieving people who have disbelieved in You and Your Messenger ﷺ, opposed the followers of Your religion and disobeyed You. Help us against

them with proof and evidence, and on the battlefield, by causing us to prevail in the land and causing their defeat; bless us with faith and righteous deeds that lead to victory. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

(20) Say [O Muhammad]: If you love Allah, then follow me.

قال الله تعالى

**قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ**

[آل عمران : ٣١]

Say [O Muhammad]: If you love Allah, then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your sins: For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

[Surah Al 'Imran 3:31]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This verse speaks of the obligation to love Allah and explains the signs, consequences and fruits thereof.

{Say [O Muhammad]: If you love Allah} that is, you claim this lofty status, above which there is no other, but it is not sufficient to make mere claims; rather it is essential to be sincere in that claim. The sign of such sincerity is following His Messenger ﷺ in all matters, in word and deed, in both major and minor issues of religion, inwardly and outwardly; if an individual follows the Messenger ﷺ, this indicates that he is sincere in his claim to love Allah, and Allah will love him, forgive

his sins, have mercy on him and guide him in all that he does and does not do.

But the one who does not follow the Messenger ﷺ does not truly love Allah, because loving Allah requires him to follow His Messenger ﷺ; so long as that is not the case, this indicates that that love is not present and that he is lying in his claim. Even if that love did exist, it would not benefit him without fulfilling the necessary conditions.

This verse sets the standard against which all people may be measured; the extent to which they follow the Messenger ﷺ is indicative of their faith and love for Allah, and any shortcoming in that reflects a shortcoming in loving Allah.

**(21) You will never attain righteousness until you spend
in charity of that which you love**

قال الله تعالى

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ
بِهِ عَلِيمٌ

[آل عمران : ٩٢]

**You will never attain righteousness until you spend [in charity]
of that which you love; and whatever you give [in charity],
verily Allah knows it well.**

[Surah Al 'Imran 3:92]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah (*Subhanahu wa Ta'ala* - Glorified and Exalted is He) encourages His slaves to spend on good causes, and says:

{You will never attain righteousness} that is, you will never reach the level of righteousness which leads to paradise,

{until you spend [in charity] of that which you love} that is, your precious wealth that you love. If you give precedence to the love of Allah over the love of wealth, and you spend it in ways that please Him, this will prove your sincere faith, the righteousness of your hearts and the genuineness of your piety. That includes spending what is precious of your wealth, spending

when the giver is in need of what he gives, and spending when one is healthy.

The verse indicates that the individual will attain righteousness according to his spending of that which he loves, and that he will be lacking according to what is lacking in his spending. Because spending in any way brings reward, whether the amount is small or great, and whether it is something he loves or not, and the words: **{You will never attain righteousness until you spend [in charity] of that which you love}** may give the impression that spending anything other than what is mentioned will be of no benefit, Allah dispelled this notion by saying: **{and whatever you give [in charity], verily Allah knows it well}**, so do not be hard on yourselves, for He will reward you according to your intentions and the extent to which (your charity) benefits others.

(22) O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.

قال الله تعالى

**يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ ۚ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ
(١٠٢) وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۚ وَأذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا
وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُم مِّنْهَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ
ءَايَاتِهِ ۚ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ (١٠٣)**

[آل عمران : ١٠٢-١٠٣]

O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims (102) And hold fast, all together, to the rope of Allah, and do not be divided among yourselves.

Remember the blessing that Allah bestowed upon you, for you were enemies then He brought your hearts together, so that by His grace, you became brethren, and you were on the brink of the pit of fire, and He saved you from it. Thus Allah makes His revelations clear to you, so that you may be guided

(103)

[Surah Al 'Imran 3:102-103]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This is a command from Allah to His believing slaves, that they should fear Him as He should be feared and persist in that, remaining steadfast and adhering to it until death. The one who persists in something will die adhering to it. If a person persists in fearing his Lord, obeying Him and turning to Him all the time when he is healthy, energetic and able, Allah will make him steadfast at the time of death and bless him with a good end.

Fearing Allah as He should be feared - as Ibn Mas'ood said - means that He is to be obeyed and not disobeyed, remembered and not forgotten, shown gratitude and not ingratitude. This verse explains what Allah deserves of fear of Him. As for what is required of people in that regard, it is as Allah says: **{So fear Allah as best you can...} (at-Taghabun 64: 16)**

The details of fearing Allah in terms of what is in the heart and actions that one should take are very many; fearing Allah means doing what Allah has enjoined and refraining from everything that Allah has forbidden.

Then Allah instructed them to do that which will help them to attain fear of Him, which is to be united and adhere to the religion of Allah. The fact that the believers' call is one should unite them in harmony, because if the Muslims are united in their religion and their hearts are in harmony with one another, that will help to make their religious affairs sound and worldly affairs in good shape. By uniting, they will be able to tackle any

matter and achieve innumerable interests that depend on unity, such as cooperating in righteousness and piety, and other matters; by the same token, division and enmity undermine their well-being, sever the bonds between them and lead to everyone striving for his own self-interests, even if that leads to harm on a community level.

Then Allah reminds them of His blessings and instructs them to remember them:

{Remember the blessing that Allah bestowed upon you, for you were enemies} killing one another and taking one another's wealth, to such an extent that the members of one tribe would fight and oppose one another, and there would be enmity and fighting among the people of one city. Their situation was one of grievous trouble; this was the situation of the Arabs before the Prophet ﷺ was sent. When Allah sent him and they believed in him, united in Islam and joined together in faith, they became like one person because of the harmony and bonds of friendship between them. Hence Allah said: **{then He brought your hearts together, so that by His grace, you became brethren, and you were on the brink of the pit of fire}** that is, you deserved to enter the fire, and there was nothing standing between you and it except death, after which you would enter it

{and He saved you from it} by means of what He blessed you with of belief in Muhammad ﷺ.

{Thus Allah makes His revelations clear to you} that is, He explains and clarifies them, and distinguishes for you truth from falsehood, guidance from misguidance

{so that you may be guided} by knowing the truth and acting upon it. This verse indicates that Allah loves His slaves to remember His blessing in their hearts and verbally, so that they may increase in gratitude towards Him and love for Him, and so that He will give them more of His bounty and blessings. The greatest of what one may remember of His blessings is the blessing of guidance to Islam, following the Messenger ﷺ and unity among the Muslims.

(23) A group of people from among you enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong

قال الله تعالى

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

[آل عمران : ١٠٤]

Let there arise from among you a group of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong. They are the ones who will be successful.

[Surah Al 'Imran 3:104]

◆ **Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:**

That is, let there be among you, O believers whom Allah has blessed with faith and holding fast to His rope,

{a group of people inviting to all that is good}. Good (*khayr*) is a comprehensive word that includes everything that brings one closer to Allah and further away from His wrath

{enjoining what is right} that is, everything that is known to be good by means of rational or *shar'i* proof

{and forbidding what is wrong} that is, everything that is known to be evil by means of rational or *shar'i* proof. This is an

instruction from Allah to the believers, that among them there should be a group that takes on the task of calling people to His way and explaining His religion to people.

That includes the scholars who teach religion; the preachers who call the people of other religions to enter Islam and call those who have gone astray to mend their ways; the *mujhideen* who strive in *jihad* for the sake of Allah; those who have the task of checking on people and making them adhere to the rulings of Islam such as the five daily prayers, *zakah*, fasting, *Hajj* and so on; and those who check on weights and measures, and check on the traders in the marketplace, preventing them from cheating or engaging in invalid transactions.

All of these matters come under the heading of communal obligations, as is indicated in this verse, in which it says,

{Let there arise from among you a group of people}. In other words, let there be among you a group of people who achieve the purpose behind the things mentioned. It is well established that when something is enjoined, it refers to that thing and whatever means are necessary to achieve it. Whatever these matters depend on is also enjoined, such as preparing for *jihad* by making ready all kinds of equipment by means of which the goal of defeating enemies and making the word of Islam supreme may be attained; acquiring knowledge with which to call people to what is good and developing means of achieving that; building schools to teach knowledge; helping the

authorities in implementing the laws of *Sharia* among the people in word and deed, and with financial support; and other matters on which these aims depend.

This group that is prepared to call people to what is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, is the elite of the believers. Hence Allah says concerning them: **{They are the ones who will be successful}**; they will attain what they are seeking (paradise) and be saved from what they fear (hell).

(24) Hasten towards forgiveness from your Lord

قال الله تعالى

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ
لِلْمُتَّقِينَ (١٣٣) الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَبِيرِ وَالْغَيْظِ
وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ (١٣٤) وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا
فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَن يَغْفِرُ
الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ (١٣٥) أُولَٰئِكَ
جَزَاؤُهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ
فِيهَا وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ (١٣٦)

[آل عمران : ١٣٣-١٣٦]

Hasten towards forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as vast as the heavens and the earth, which is prepared for the pious (133) Those who spend in times of both ease and hardship, who control their anger, and pardon people, for Allah loves those who do good (134) And those who, if they do something shameful or wrong themselves, remember Allah and ask for forgiveness for their sins - for who can forgive sins except Allah? - and do not knowingly persist in what they have done (135) For such their reward is forgiveness from their Lord, and gardens through which rivers flow, to abide

**therein forever; how excellent a reward for those who work
[and strive] (136)**

[Surah Al 'Imran 3:133-136]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Then Allah commanded them to hasten towards His forgiveness and His paradise, as vast as the heavens and the earth, which Allah has prepared for the pious who fear Him, for they are its people and acts of piety are what bring one to it.

Then Allah describes the pious and their deeds:

{Those who spend in times of both ease and hardship} that is, at times of difficulty or ease. When things are easy, they spend a great deal and when things are hard they do not think of any deed of kindness as being too little.

{who control their anger} that is, if someone else harms them in a way that makes them angry - which refers to the heart being filled with rage and the desire to take revenge in word and deed - they do not act in accordance with human nature; rather they suppress the anger in their hearts and show patience in refraining from treating the offender in the same manner.

{and pardon people} - pardoning people includes pardoning everyone who mistreats you in word or deed. Pardon is superior to suppressing anger because pardon means not holding it against the one who mistreated you and forgiving the offender. This can only come from one who has attained

praiseworthy characteristics and has given up bad characteristics, and who is thinking of the reward of Allah, so he forgives the slaves of Allah out of compassion and kindness towards them, because he does not want to hurt them, and so that Allah will forgive him and his reward will be with his generous Lord, not with His helpless slave, as Allah says:

{...but whoever forgives and reconciles, his reward is with Allah...} (ash-Shoora 42: 40)

Then Allah tells us about a quality that is more comprehensive, better and more sublime, which is doing good (*ihsan*):

{for Allah loves those who do good}. Doing good refers to **two** things: **(1)** doing well in worshipping the Creator and **(2)** doing good to other people.

The Prophet ﷺ described doing well in worshipping the Creator as: **«..worshipping Allah as if you can see Him, for if you do not see Him, He sees you.» (Muslim)**

Doing good to other people means trying to help or benefit them in both spiritual and worldly terms, and warding off harm from them in both spiritual and worldly terms. That includes enjoining them to do good and forbidding them to do bad, teaching those who are ignorant, admonishing those who are heedless, offering sincere advice to the common folk and prominent figures, striving to bring them together, giving them

charity, and spending on them in ways that are obligatory or encouraged, according to their situation and needs.

That includes being generous and helpful, refraining from annoying them, and putting up with their annoyance, as Allah described the pious in these verses. Whoever does these things has done his duty towards Allah and towards His slaves.

Then Allah tells us how they apologize to their Lord for their sins: **{And those who, if they do something shameful or wrong themselves}** that is, if they do bad deeds, whether they are major sins or of a lesser degree, they hasten to repent and seek forgiveness, and they remember their Lord and His warning to those who are disobedient and His promise to those who fear Him. So they ask for forgiveness for their sins and concealment for their faults; at the same time, they give up their sins and regret them. Hence Allah says: **{and [they] do not knowingly persist in what they have done}**.

{For such} that is, for those who are described in these terms **{their reward is forgiveness from their Lord}** that removes the burden of sin that forms an impediment to reaching paradise

{and gardens through which rivers flow} in which there is eternal blessing, delight, happiness, well-being, goodness, happiness, palaces, lofty and elegant dwellings, beautiful and fruitful trees, and rivers flowing through that splendid abode.

{to abide therein forever} - they will never leave it; they will never want anything else and its delights will never change.

{how excellent a reward for those who work [and strive]}. They strove a little for the sake of Allah and were rewarded with much. Those who push themselves to travel by night will, in the morning, be glad that they made that effort, and at the time of reward, the one who strove hard will find his reward paid in full.

These verses are among the texts quoted by *Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* as evidence that deeds are part of faith, which is unlike the view of the *Murjites*.

To prove this, we quote the following verse from *Soorat al-Hadeed*, which is akin to this passage in *Al 'Imran*:

{Race towards forgiveness from your Lord and paradise which is as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messengers...} (al-Hadeed 57: 21)

The verse in *Soorat al-Hadeed* only refers to believing in Allah and His Messengers, and the verse here in *Soorat Al 'Imran* (3:133) says that paradise is prepared for the pious.

Then Allah describes the pious in terms of financial and physical actions, which indicates that these pious people who are described in these terms are the same as those who are mentioned in *Soorat al-Hadeed* as believers (in Allah and His Messenger ﷺ).

(25) Every soul will taste death

قال الله تعالى

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّقُونَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ فَمَنْ زُحِرَ
عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ

[آل عمران : ١٨٥]

Every soul will taste death, and only on the Day of
Resurrection will you be requited in full [for your deeds].
Whoever is saved from the fire and admitted to paradise will
have triumphed, for the life of this world is nothing but a
fleeting vanity.

[Surah Al 'Imran 3:185]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This verse highlights the reality of this world in order to put people off being overly concerned with it because of its transient nature, for it is a fleeting vanity that dazzles with its adornment and deceives with its ostentatious displays, but it will come to an end and people will pass on to the realm of eternity, when they will be requited for what they did in this world, good or bad.

{Whoever is saved} that is, brought out **{from the fire and admitted to paradise will have triumphed}** that is, he will have attained the greatest victory of escaping from the eternal

punishment and reaching the gardens of delight in which there is that which no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever entered the mind of man. What this verse means is that whoever is not saved from the fire and admitted to paradise has not triumphed; rather he is doomed to eternal misery and suffering.

This verse contains a subtle reference to joy and punishment in *al-barzakh*, and that people will be partially requited therein for what they did, and they will taste the reward or punishment of what they did in this world. This may be understood from the words and only on the Day of Resurrection will you be requited in full [for your deeds]}. In other words, requital in full for one's deeds will only come on the Day of Resurrection; before that, (there will be some degree of requital) in *al-barzakh*, and even in this world, as Allah says elsewhere:

{We will surely cause them to taste a lesser punishment before the greater punishment...} (as-Sajdah 32: 21)

(26) Fear your Lord Who created you from a single soul

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا
زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ
وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

[النساء : ١]

O humankind, fear your Lord, Who created you from a single soul, and from it created its mate, and from the pair of them spread countless men and women far and wide. Fear Allah, in Whose name you demand your mutual [rights], and be mindful of your ties of kinship, for Allah is always watching you.

[Surah an-Nisa 4:1]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This *soorah* begins with the command to fear Allah and worship Him, and to uphold ties of kinship. We are urged to do these things, and in this *soorah* Allah explains the reason for all of that, and why we should fear Him.

{**your Lord, Who created you**}, provided for you and bestowed great blessings upon you, which includes His creation of you {**from a single soul, and from it created its mate**} so that

there would be compatibility between them and that he may find comfort in her, thus the blessing will be completed and joy will be attained.

There is also another reason to fear Him, which is that you demand your mutual rights in His name, and venerate Him by doing so, in that when you want your needs to be met and your goals fulfilled, you try to get it by asking for it in the name of Allah. So the one who wants that says to another person: I ask you by Allah to do such and such. That is because he knows what the other person has in his heart of veneration towards Allah, which will make him not reject anyone who asks him by Allah. So just as you venerate Him by doing that, you should also venerate Him by worshipping Him and fearing Him.

Similarly, Allah tells us that He is always watching; in other words, He can see his slaves in all that they do, in secret and in public, for He is always watching them. This should prompt us to remember that He is always watching, and thus feel shy before Him, by constantly fearing Him.

By telling us that He created them from a single soul and that He spread them throughout the earth, even though they have one origin, this should make them compassionate and kind towards one another. Alongside the command to fear Him comes the command to be mindful of ties of kinship and the prohibition on severing these ties. This serves to affirm the importance of upholding ties of kinship: just as it is obligatory to

fulfil duties towards Allah, it is also essential to fulfil duties towards other people, especially relatives. In fact, doing one's duty towards them is part of doing one's duty to Allah, that Allah has enjoined.

Think about how this *soorah* begins with the command to fear Allah and be mindful of ties of kinship and spouses in general. Then after that, these factors are explained fully, in detail, from the beginning of the *soorah* to the end. It is as if the entire *soorah* focuses on these issues, as it goes on to explain in detail and clarify what is mentioned in brief here.

The words **{and from it created its mate}** emphasize paying attention to the rights of husbands and wives, and fulfilling them, because wives are created from husbands, so the closest connections, ties and relationships exist between them.

(27) Men will have their reward and women will have their reward

قال الله تعالى

**وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ ۚ لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا
اَكْتَسَبُوا وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا اَكْتَسَبْنَ ۚ وَسَأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا**

[النساء : ٣٢]

Do not covet the bounties which Allah has bestowed more abundantly on some of you than on others. Men will have the reward for what they earn, and women will have the reward for what they earn. Ask Allah of His bounty. Verily Allah has knowledge of all things.

[Surah an-Nisa 4:32]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Allah instructs the believers that no one should covet that which Allah has given more of to others, whether that is things that it is possible for them to acquire or things that it is not possible for them to acquire. Hence women should not covet the characteristics of men, by means of which men have an advantage over women; the one who is poor or has some imperfections or shortcomings should not merely wish to be like

one who is rich or perfect, because that is the very essence of envy, which is to wish for the blessing that Allah bestowed upon someone else to be taken from him and given to you.

Moreover, such wishes are indicative of displeasure with the decree of Allah and being content with laziness and wishful thinking, unaccompanied by any effort or earning. Rather what is praiseworthy is two things: to strive to the best of one's ability and to do that which will benefit one's religious and worldly interests, asking Allah for His bounty, and not relying on oneself or anyone other than one's Lord.

Hence Allah says: **{Men will have the reward for what they earn}** that is, of their deeds that will lead to the desired results. **{and women will have the reward for what they earn}** - so each of them will not attain anything but that which he or she has earned and worked hard for.

{Ask Allah of His bounty} that is, for everything that has to do with your religious or worldly affairs. Doing so is a sign of wisdom and of being blessed, in contrast to the one who fails to strive or relies on himself, not acknowledging his need of his Lord; or those who do both, in which case they are forsaken and are losers.

{Verily Allah has knowledge of all things}, therefore He gives to the one who He knows deserves it, and He withholds it from the one who He knows does not deserve it.

(28) Men are in charge of women

قال الله تعالى

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّмُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا
أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَإِلِّصَّاحَتُ قِنْتَتُ حَفِظَتْ لِلْغَيْبِ بِمَا
حَفِظَ اللَّهُ

[النساء : ٣٤]

Men are in charge of women, because Allah has made one of them excel the other, and because they spend of their wealth [on them]. Therefore, the righteous women are obedient, and guard in [the husband's] absence what Allah would have them guard.

[Surah an-Nisa 4:34]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah tells us that: **{Men are in charge of women}** that is, they are in charge with regard to making sure that they are doing their duties towards Allah, by keeping up with obligatory duties and restraining them from committing evil; men are obliged to make sure that they (women) adhere to that. They are also in charge of them in terms of spending on them, clothing them, and providing accommodation to them.

Then He states the reason why men are in charge of women: **{because Allah has made one of them excel the other, and because they spend of their wealth [on them]}** that is, because of the superiority of men over women; men are superior to women in many ways; for example, positions of political authority are only for men, as is prophethood and messengerhood. Moreover, men are singled out, to the exclusion of women, for many acts of worship, such as *jihad* and *‘Eid* and *Jumu’ah* prayers.

It is also because of what Allah has bestowed exclusively on them of wisdom, mature thinking, patience and perseverance, the like of which women do not have. Men also have the exclusive obligation of spending on their wives; moreover, there are many types of spending that are demanded exclusively of men, by which they are distinct from women.

Perhaps this is the reason why Allah says **{and because they spend of their wealth [on them]}**. No mention is made of those on whom they are to spend, so as to indicate spending in a general sense. Thus it is known that a man is like a guardian and a master to his wife, and she is like a prisoner and servant to him. Therefore, his role is to do his duty towards that which Allah has put him in charge of.

The woman's role is to obey her Lord and obey her husband. Hence Allah says: **{Therefore the righteous women are obedient}** to Allah **{and guard in [the husband's] absence what**

Allah would have them guard} that is, they obey their husbands even in their absence; the wife guards her husband with regard to herself and his wealth. That is because Allah has enjoined upon them to guard themselves, and He has guided them to that; they could not do it without His help, because the human soul is inclined to evil. But whoever puts his trust in Allah, He will suffice him and take care of everything that worries him of his religious and worldly affairs.

(29) O you who believe, obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those of you who are in authority.

قال الله تعالى

**يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِيَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا**

[النساء : ٥٩]

O you who believe, obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those of you who are in authority. If you are in dispute over any matter, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you [truly] believe in Allah and the Last Day; that is better and more seemly in the end.

[Surah an-Nisa 4:59]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Then Allah instructs us to obey Him and to obey His Messenger ﷺ, by doing that which they command, doing what is obligatory and encouraged, and avoiding that which they prohibit. He also instructs us to obey those in authority, such as rulers, governors and scholars, because people's religious and worldly affairs cannot be put in order except by obeying those who are in authority, in obedience to Allah and seeking that

which is with Him. But that is on condition that they do not enjoin disobedience to Allah; if they do so, then there should not be any obedience to any created being if it involves disobedience towards the Creator. Perhaps this is the reason why the verb ("obey") is not repeated with regard to those who are in authority, but it is mentioned with regard to the Messenger ﷺ. That is because the Messenger ﷺ only enjoins obedience to Allah, and whoever obeys him has obeyed Allah; but when it comes to those who are in authority, the command to obey them is stipulated on condition that it does not involve any sin.

Then Allah instructs us to refer anything concerning which people dispute, of major or minor matters of religion, to Allah and to His Messenger ﷺ; in other words, to the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger ﷺ, for in them are final, decisive answers to all matters of dispute, either in a clear and specific text, or on the basis of the general meaning of the text, or on the basis of a hint or indication, or of a concept or a general principle to which analogy may be made for similar cases. That is because the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger ﷺ form the basis of the religion and faith cannot be sound unless it is based on both. Hence referring to both is a condition of faith, and this is why Allah says **{if you [truly] believe in Allah and the Last Day}**. This indicates that whoever does not refer to them concerning controversial matters is not really a believer; rather he is a believer in *taghoot*, as mentioned in the following verse.

{that}, namely referring to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ **{is better and more seemly in the end}**, because the ruling of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ is the best and most just of rulings, and is in the best interests of people in their religious and worldly affairs and in the hereafter.

(30) Whatever good befalls you is from Allah

قال الله تعالى

مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ
وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا

[النساء : ٧٩]

Whatever good befalls you is from Allah; but whatever misfortune befalls you is from yourself. We have sent you [O Muhammad] to humankind as a Messenger. And sufficient is Allah as a witness.

[Surah an-Nisa 4:79]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{Whatever good befalls you} in terms of both spiritual and worldly interests

{is from Allah} it is He Who blesses with it and makes means of attaining it easy.

{but whatever misfortune befalls you} in terms of both spiritual and worldly interests

{is from yourself} that is, because of your sins and what you have earned, but what Allah forgives is far greater.

Allah has opened the gates of kindness to His slaves, and He has commanded them to implement the means that will lead to His bounty and grace. He informs them that sins form an impediment to His grace, so if a person commits sins, he has no one to blame but himself, because he is preventing himself from attaining the bounty and grace of Allah.

(31) If the Qur'an had been from anyone other than Allah, they would have found therein many contradictions.

قال الله تعالى

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ
اٰخْتِلَافًا كَثِيْرًا

[النساء : ٨٢]

Will they not then ponder on the Qur'an? If it had been from anyone other than Allah, they would surely have found therein many contradictions.

[Surah an-Nisa 4:82]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah enjoins pondering His Book, which means contemplating the meaning and studying its principles and lessons intensely, along with whatever helps to achieve that aim. Pondering the Book of Allah is the key to knowledge, and all that is good and all types of knowledge may be found therein. By doing that, faith will increase and become deeply rooted in the heart.

For the Qur'an teaches us about the Lord whom we worship, and His attributes of perfection, and that He is to be declared above all shortcomings. It sets out for us the route that

leads to Him and describes the characteristics of the people who follow it, and what they will attain when they come to Him. It informs us of our real enemy and tells us of the path that will lead to punishment, and describes the characteristics of the people who follow it and how they will be dealt with when there is a reason for which they should be punished.

The more we ponder the Book, the more we will increase in knowledge, good deeds and insight. Hence Allah has enjoined and encouraged doing so, and He tells us that this is the purpose for which the Qur'an was revealed, as He says elsewhere:

{This is a blessed Book that We have sent down to you, so that they may ponder its verses, and so that people of understanding may pay heed.} (Sad 38: 29)

- and:

{Will they not then ponder on the Qur'an, or are there locks on their hearts?} (Muhammad 47: 24)

One of the benefits of pondering over the Book of Allah is that it causes the individual to become certain in faith and knowledge that it is the words of Allah, because parts of it confirm other parts, and its parts are in harmony with one another. Hence you will see rulings, stories and narratives repeated in several places in the Qur'an, all of them in harmony, confirming one another and not contradicting one another. Thus it is known that the Qur'an is perfect and that it comes from One Whose knowledge encompasses all things.

Hence Allah says: **{If it had been from anyone other than Allah, they would surely have found therein many contradictions}** that is, because it comes from Allah, there are no contradictions in it at all.

(32) When the angels take the souls of those who have wronged themselves

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّيْنَاهُمُ الظَّالِمِينَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ قَالُوا فِيمَ كُنْتُمْ قَالُوا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا فَأُولَئِكَ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا (٩٧) إِلَّا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا (٩٨) فَأُولَئِكَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا (٩٩)

[النساء : ٩٧-٩٩]

Verily, when the angels take [in death] the souls of those who have wronged themselves, they ask them: What was the matter with you? They reply: We were weak and oppressed in the land. They say: Was Allah's earth not spacious enough for you to migrate to some other place? For those, their ultimate abode is hell, an evil journey's end (97) Except those who are [really] weak and oppressed - men, women. and children - who have no means in their power and do not know where to go (98) For these, there is hope that Allah will forgive them, for Allah is Pardoning, Off-Forgiving (99)

[Surah an-Nisa 4:97-99]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This is a stern warning to those who did not migrate when they were able to, until they died. The angels who seize their souls rebuke them with these harsh words and say: **{What was the matter with you}** In other words: what was your situation? How did you make yourself distinct from the polytheists? In fact, you increased their numbers and perhaps you supported them against the believers, and you missed out on a lot of righteous deeds, *jihad* with Allah's Messenger ﷺ and being with the Muslims, helping them against their enemies.

{They reply: We were weak and oppressed in the land} that is, weak, downtrodden and oppressed; we had no means of migrating. But they are not speaking the truth when they say that, because Allah rebuked them and warned them, and Allah does not burden any soul with more than it can bear.

Then an exception is made for those who were genuinely weak and oppressed; hence the angels say to them: **{Was Allah's earth not spacious enough for you to migrate to some other place?}** This is a question that is asked to establish a fact. In other words, it is well established in the minds of everyone that the land of Allah is spacious and whenever a person is in a place where he is not able to practice his religion openly, then he has other places on earth and a way out to a land where he will be able to worship Allah, as Allah says: **{O My slaves who believe,**

verily My earth is spacious, so worship Me alone} (al- Ankaboot 29: 56)

Allah says of these people who have no excuse: **{For those, their ultimate abode is hell, an evil journey's end}**. This, as stated above, mentions the reasons that led to that; on the Day of Judgement this is what will happen, if all conditions are fulfilled and there are no impediments; but there may be impediments that could prevent that fate.

This verse indicates that migration is one of the greatest obligations, and failing to do it is forbidden; in fact, it is one of the gravest major sins. This verse indicates that everyone who dies has taken in full all that was decreed for him of provision, lifespan and deeds. This understanding is based on the phrase translated here as **{take [in death]}**, which comes from a root that has the meaning of taking in full, because if there was anything left for him to take, his soul would not be taken in death.

This verse highlights belief in the angels and praises them, because Allah mentions them by way of confirming His approval of them.

Then an exception is made for those who are truly weak and oppressed, who have no means of migrating at all, **{and do not know where to go}**.

Allah says concerning these people: **{For these, there is hope that Allah will forgive them, for Allah is Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving}**.

The word '*asa*' (translated here as **{there is hope that}**), when used in reference to Allah, indicates that it will inevitably happen, because of His generosity and kindness. When the Qur'an says that there is hope of reward for the one who does some deeds, this means that the reward will not be due unless the deed is done in the proper manner. If it is not done in the proper manner, then the individual has fallen short and does not deserve that reward. And Allah knows best.

This verse indicates that the one who is unable to do what he is instructed of an obligatory duty or otherwise is excused, as Allah says concerning those who are unable to engage in *jihad*: **{There is no blame on the blind nor any blame on the lame nor any blame on the sick [if they do not go forth to fight]...}** (al-Fath 48: 17). And Allah says of the commands in general: **{So fear Allah as best you can...}** (ar-Taghābun 64: 16)

The Prophet ﷺ said: **«If I instruct you to do something, then do as much of it as you can.»** (Muslim)

But there is no excuse for a person unless he tries his best then is not able to do it, because Allah says: **{who have no means in their power}**. This verse indicates that having a guide in *Hajj* and '*Umrah*', and similar matters where travel is required, is one of the conditions of being able to do it.

(33) Be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents or relatives.

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلّٰهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِكُمْ
أَوِ الْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللّٰهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا
الْهَوَىٰ أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا وَإِن تَلُودُوا أَوْ تَعْرِضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا

[النساء ١٣٥]

O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both. So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just. And if you distort [your testimony] or refuse [to give it], then indeed Allah is ever, of what you do, Aware.

[Surah an-Nisa 4:135]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah instructs His believing slaves to **{be steadfast in justice and bear true witness for the sake of Allah}**. The word *qawwam* (translated here as **{steadfast}**) is an intensive form of the word. What is meant is: in all your affairs, be steadfast in

standing up for justice, which means being just with regard to the dues of Allah and the dues of His slaves.

Justice with regard to the dues of Allah means not using His blessings as a means to disobey Him; rather they should be used as a means to do righteous deeds. Justice with regard to the dues of other people means paying all dues that you owe to others, just as you demand your own dues. So you must spend on obligatory maintenance, pay debts, and treat others with a good attitude as you would like to be treated.

One of the greatest types of justice is justice with regard to views and opinions, and those who hold those views. So you should not judge in favor of one of two views, or one of two disputants, because of his affiliation or because of your inclination towards one of the two. Rather you should make it your aim to judge between them on the basis of justice and fairness. Another aspect of justice is giving testimony of what you know, regardless of the way in which you know it, even if that is against loved ones or against oneself.

Hence Allah says: **{and bear true witness for the sake of Allah, even if it is against yourselves, your parents, or your kinsfolk. Whether he is rich or poor, Allah can best take care of both}**. That is: do not favor the rich man because of his wealth, or the poor man out of mercy towards him - or so you claim; rather you should give testimony on the basis of truth, regardless of who may be affected.

Being steadfast in justice is one of the most important matters, and is one of the most indicative of the religious commitment, piety and status in Islam of the one who is just. The one who is sincere to himself or wants to save himself must pay the utmost attention to justice, make it his focus, resolve to attain it, and strive to rid himself of all obstacles and barriers that prevent him from adhering to justice and acting accordingly.

The greatest barrier to that is following whims and desires. Hence Allah points out the importance of ridding oneself of this barrier, as He says: **{So do not follow your emotions}** that is, do not follow your own emotions, whims and desires that are contrary to the truth, lest - by doing so - you swerve from the right path and are not guided to justice, for whims and desires will either make a person blind, so that he sees the truth as false and falsehood as true, or he may recognize the truth but fail to follow it because of his whims and desires. The one who is saved from his whims and desires has been guided to the truth and to the straight path.

When Allah stated that it is essential to be steadfast in justice, He also forbade the opposite of that, which is distorting one's testimony and the like, twisting one's words in order to avoid stating the truth in all aspects or in some aspects. That includes distorting one's testimony and not giving it in full, or applying one's testimony to a different issue. All of that comes under the heading of distorting testimony, because it is a deviation from the truth.

{or decline to give it} that is, fail to be just as you are enjoined to be, such as the witness withholding his testimony, or the judge not giving his verdict that he should give.

{then verily Allah is well aware of all that you do} that is, He encompasses with His knowledge all that you do, both in secret and openly. This is a stern warning to the one who distorts his testimony or declines to give it. It is more appropriate that this be addressed to the one who judges on the basis of falsehood or gives false testimony, because his offence is greater; the former only failed to do what is right, but the latter fails to do what is right and also does what is wrong.

(34) Help one another in righteousness and piety, but do not help one another in sin and transgression.

قال الله تعالى

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

[المائدة : ٢]

Help one another in righteousness and piety, but do not help one another in sin and transgression.

[Surah al-Ma'idah 5:2]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{Help one another in righteousness and piety} that is, help one another to be righteous. The word *birr* (translated here as **{righteousness}**) includes everything that Allah loves and that pleases Him of actions both outward and inward, having to do with the rights of Allah and the rights of other people.

In this context, the word *taqwa* (translated here as **{piety}**) includes refraining from everything that Allah and His Messenger ﷺ hate, of actions both outward and inward.

Thus it is commanded to do every deed that is regarded as good, and it is commanded to refrain from every deed that is regarded as evil. The individual is enjoined to do that himself and

to cooperate with his fellow believers in saying and doing everything that will motivate and encourage people to do that.

{but do not help one another in sin} that is, overstepping the mark by doing acts of disobedience that incur a burden of sin and may be a cause of unease and embarrassment

{and transgression} that is, transgressing against people with regard to their blood, wealth and honor. One must refrain from acts of sin and wrongdoing, and help others to refrain also.

(35) This day I have perfected your religion for you

قال الله تعالى

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ
الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

[المائدة : ٣]

This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My blessing upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.

[Surah al-Ma'idah 5:3]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{This day have I perfected your religion for you} by completing the victory and perfecting all laws and teachings that have to do with both outward and inward matters, fundamentals and minor issues. Hence the Qur'an and *Sunnah* are completely sufficient with regard to the rulings of Islam, both fundamental and minor issues.

Anyone who tries to be smart by claiming that the people have no choice, in learning their beliefs and rulings, but to refer to other branches of knowledge apart from knowledge of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*, such as "Islamic philosophy" (*ilm al-kalam*), is ignorant and his call is false, because it is an implicit claim that

Islam cannot be complete without that which he is promoting. This is one of the worst kinds of wrongdoing and is an accusation of ignorance against Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.

{completed My blessing upon you}, both visible and invisible **{and have chosen for you Islam as your religion}** that is, I have chosen it and selected it for you as your religion, and am pleased with it for you. Therefore, you should adhere to it out of gratitude to your Lord, and praise the One Who has blessed you with the best, noblest and most perfect of religions.

(36) When you prepare for prayer, purify yourselves...

قال الله تعالى

**يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى
الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا
فَاطَّهَّرُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنْكُمْ مِّنَ الْغَائِطِ
أَوْ لَمَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا
بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَٰكِنْ
يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ**

[المائدة : ٦]

O you who believe, when you prepare for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands [and arms] to the elbows; wipe over your heads [with wet hands]; and [wash] your feet to the ankles. If you are in a state of major impurity [janabah], then purify yourselves [ghusl]. If you are ill, or on a journey, or have relieved yourselves, or you have touched women, and cannot find water, then find some clean earth, and wipe your faces and hands with it [tayammum]. Allah does not wish to impose any hardship on you, but to purify you, and complete His favor to you, so that you may give thanks.

[Surah al-Ma'idah 5:6]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This verse includes many rulings of which we will mention those that Allah enables us to:

- 1.** What is mentioned here, and complying with it and acting upon it, is among the requirements of faith without which faith is not complete, because the verse begins with the words **{O you who believe...}**. What is meant is: O you who believe, do what your faith requires, and what has been prescribed for you.
- 2.** The command to establish prayer, because Allah says: **{when you prepare for prayer}**.
- 3.** The command to form the intention to pray, because Allah says: **{when you prepare for prayer}**, that is, with the aim and intention of praying.
- 4.** Being in a state of purification is stipulated in order for the prayer to be valid, because Allah enjoins it when preparing to pray, and the basic meaning of enjoining is that something is obligatory.
- 5.** Purification does not become obligatory when the time for prayer begins; rather it becomes obligatory when one wants to pray.
- 6.** In the case of everything that may be called prayer - whether it is obligatory or supererogatory, a communal obligation, or the funeral prayer - it is stipulated that one should be in a state of purity. This even applies to prostration on its own, according to

many scholars, such as the prostration when reading Qur'an and the prostration of gratitude.

7. The command to wash the face, from the regular hairline to the jawline and chin lengthwise, and from ear to ear. That includes rinsing the mouth and nose, as stated in the *Sunnah*, as well as hair on the face; if the facial hair is light, the water must reach the skin, but if it is thick, it is sufficient to wet the surface of the hair.

8. The command to wash the hands (and arms), up to the elbow. According to the majority of commentators, *ilaa* (the word translated here as **{up to}**) means "with", because what is required cannot be completed except by washing the entire elbow.

9. The command to wipe the head.

10. It is obligatory to wipe the entire head (as is indicated by the grammatical structure of the original Arabic text).

11. It is sufficient to wipe the head in any manner, with one or both hands, or with a cloth or a piece of wood and the like, because Allah mentioned wiping in general terms and did not specify what is to be used to do it, which indicates that any manner of doing it is acceptable.

12. What is required is to wipe the head. If someone were to wash his head, without wiping the hand over the head, that

would not be acceptable, because it would not be doing what Allah had enjoined.

13. The command to wash the feet up to the ankles; something similar may be said concerning this as was said concerning the arms.

14. This is a refutation of the *Rafidis*, because the majority of scholars read the word *arjulakum* (**{your feet}**) in the accusative (that is, the object of the verb **{wash}**); it is not permissible to wipe them so long as they are uncovered.

15. This verse may be taken as an indication that it is permissible to wipe over the *khuffayn* (leather slippers), according to a variant recitation (*arjulikum*), which would connect it to the act of wiping over the head. In that case the feet may be wiped over if they are covered with the *khuffayn*. Each recitation may have its own meaning: according to the first recitation (*arjulakum*), the feet are to be washed if they are uncovered; according to the second recitation (*arjulikum*), the feet are to be wiped over if they are covered with the *khuffayn*.

16. It is enjoined to follow a particular order when doing *wudoo'*, because Allah mentions the actions of *wudoo'* in a particular order, and because He mentioned something that is to be wiped - namely the head - in between two things that are to be washed, and there would be no point in doing so except to emphasize a particular order.

17. That particular order has to do with the four main parts of the body mentioned in this verse. With regard to the order of rinsing the mouth and nose and washing the face, or washing the right and left in the case of the arms and feet, doing these things in a particular order is not obligatory. Rather it is *mustahabb* to rinse the mouth and nose before washing the face, to start with the right before the left when washing the arms and feet, and to wipe the head before the ears.

18. The command to renew *wudoo'* for each prayer, so as to do it exactly as enjoined.

19. The command to wash oneself in the case of *janabah* (impurity following sexual activity).

20. It is obligatory to ensure that water reaches all parts of the body when doing *ghusl*, because Allah mentions purifying of the body, without specifying some particular parts to the exclusion of others.

21. The command to wash the hair thoroughly when purifying oneself from *janabah*.

22. Purification from minor impurity may be included in purification from major impurity; if both are applicable, it is sufficient to intend to form the intention of purification, then wash the entire body, because Allah only said to purify oneself, and He did not say that one should repeat *wudoo'*.

23. The word *junub* (one who is in a state of *janabah*) is applicable to anyone who has emitted *maniy*, whether awake or asleep, or who has had intercourse, whether he ejaculated or not.

24. The one who remembers having a wet dream but does not find any wetness does not have to do ghusl, because in that case he is not *junub*.

25. A reminder of Allah's blessing to His slaves, as He prescribed *tayammum* for them.

26. One of the reasons for *tayammum* being permissible is sickness which will be worsened by washing with water; in that case it is permissible to do *tayammum*.

27. One of the reasons for *tayammum* being permissible is travelling and having relieved oneself by urinating or defecating, if no water is available. Thus sickness makes *tayammum* permissible even if water is available, because of the harm that would result from using it. The other reasons make *tayammum* permissible when there is no water available, even if one is not travelling.

28. Emissions from the front and back passages, of urine and stools respectively, invalidate *wudoo'*.

29. This verse is quoted as evidence by those who say that *wudoo'* is only invalidated by these two things (relieving oneself or touching women), not by touching the private part and so on.

- 30.** It is *mustahabb* to use euphemisms in order to avoid using foul language, because Allah says: **{or have relieved yourselves}**.
- 31.** Touching a woman with desire and pleasure invalidates *wudoo'*.
- 32.** It is stipulated that no water be available in order for *tayammum* to be valid.
- 33.** When water becomes available, even if that is whilst praying, *tayammum* becomes invalid, because Allah only permitted it when water is not available.
- 34.** If the time for prayer begins and a person does not have water with him, he must look for it where he is staying, and nearby, because it cannot be said that he could not find water if he did not look for it.
- 35.** If a person finds water but it is not sufficient for him to purify himself completely, then he must use it up, then do *tayammum* after that.
- 36.** If water is altered by *halal*, pure substances, using it takes precedence over *tayammum*, because water that has been changed is still water, so it is included in the words **{and cannot find water}**.
- 37.** It is essential to form the intention of *tayammum*, as may be understood from the original Arabic text, because the Arabic word *tayammum* means to aim and intend to do something.

38. Anything that accumulates on the face of the earth is valid for *tayammum*, such as dust and the like. Based on that, the words **{and wipe your faces and hands with it}** either refer to what is usually the case, as one will usually have dust available with which one may wipe, and it will stick to the face and hands, or this is indicating the better way, and that if it is possible to use earth in which there is dust, this is preferable.

39. It is not valid to do *tayammum* with impure earth, because it is not pure and clean; rather it is impure.

40. What is to be wiped in the case of *tayammum* is the face and hands only, and not other parts of the body.

41. The words **{your faces}**, include the entire face, and indicate that all of it is to be wiped, but one is excused from having to insert dust into the mouth and nose, or make it reach the skin that is beneath facial hair, even if said hair is thin.

42. The hands are to be wiped up to the wrists only, because when the word *yadayn* (hands) is used in a general sense, what is meant is the hands. If it were required that the wiping reach up to the forearms, Allah would have specified that as He did in the case of *wudoo'*.

43. The verse is general in meaning and indicates that *tayammum* is permissible for all types of impurity, both major and minor; in fact, it is also permissible in the case of impurities on the body, because Allah has made it an alternative to purification with water and has mentioned it in general terms in

this verse, and has not restricted it. (It may be said that impurities on the body are not included in the ruling on *tayammum*, because the context speaks of impurity [in the sense of minor or major impurity] This is the view of the majority of scholars.)

44. The places of *tayammum* are the same in the case of both minor and major impurity, namely the face and hands.

45. If a person intends to do *tayammum* to purify himself from both types of impurity, this is acceptable, based on the general meaning of the verse.

46. It is sufficient to wipe with anything, with the hand or otherwise, because Allah said **{and wipe}**, but He did not say what is to be used for wiping. This indicates that it may be done with anything.

47. It is stipulated that things be done in a certain order when purifying oneself with *tayammum*, as is also stipulated in the case of *wudoo'*; moreover, Allah started with mention of wiping the face, before wiping the hands.

48. In the rulings that He has prescribed for us, Allah has not caused us any hardship or difficulty. Rather it is mercy from Him towards His slaves, to purify them and complete His favor upon them.

49. Outward purification with water or dust is meant to be complementary to inward purification which is attained by

affirming the oneness of Allah (*Tawheed*) and repenting sincerely.

50. Even though there is no visible sign of purification in the case of *tayammum*, it is still an intangible, spiritual purification that comes about as a result of complying with the command of Allah.

51. One should reflect upon the wisdom behind the laws that Allah has ordained with regard to purification and other matters, so as to increase in knowledge and in gratitude and love for Allah, for what He has prescribed of rulings that enable one to reach a high status.

(37) Allah will bring forth a people He will love and who love him

قال الله تعالى

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَن يَرْتَدَّ مِنكُم عَن دِينِهِ ۖ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ ۖ أَذِلَّةٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٍ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

[المائدة : ٥٤]

O you who believe, whoever of you should revert from his religion - Allah will bring forth [in place of them] a people He will love and who will love Him [who are] humble toward the believers, strong against the disbelievers; they strive in the cause of Allah and do not fear the blame of a critic. That is the favor of Allah; He bestows it upon whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.

[Surah al-Ma'idah 5:54]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah tells us that He has no need of His creation, and that whoever apostatizes from His religion will never harm Him at all; rather he only harms himself. Allah has sincere slaves

whom the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful has guaranteed to guide and has promised that He will bring forth, and that they will be the most perfect of humanity in characteristics, the strongest at heart and the best in attitude. The greatest of their characteristics is that Allah loves them and they love Him. Allah's love for a person is the greatest blessing that He may bestow upon him, and the greatest virtue with which Allah may favor him. If Allah loves a person, He makes things easy for him and enables him to do good deeds and refrain from evil deeds; He also causes His slaves to love that person.

One of the requirements of a person's love for his Lord is that he has no choice but to follow the Messenger ﷺ both outwardly and inwardly, in word and deed, in all circumstances, as Allah says: **{Say: If you love Allah then follow me; Allah will love you...} [Al 'Imran 3: 31]**

One of the prerequisites of Allah loving a person is that he does a lot of deeds to draw near to Allah, both obligatory and supererogatory actions, as the Prophet ﷺ said in the *saheeh hadith* which tells us that Allah says:

«My slave does not draw near to Me with anything more beloved to Me than what which I have enjoined upon him (of obligatory duties), and My slave continues to draw near to Me with supererogatory deeds so that I will love him. When I love him I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes and his foot with which

he walks. Were he to ask (something) of Me, I would surely give it to him, and were he to ask Me for refuge, I would surely grant him it.» (Bukhari)

Another of the prerequisites of Allah loving a person is knowing Him and remembering Him a great deal, for love without knowing Allah is sorely lacking; indeed, it is non-existent, even if one claims that it is there. The one who loves Allah remembers Him a great deal, and when Allah loves a person, He will accept a little of good deeds from him and will forgive a great deal of mistakes on his part.

(38) Those who have the most enmity towards the believers

قال الله تعالى

لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا
وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُم مَّوَدَّةً لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصْرِي ذَلِكَ بِأَن
مِنْهُمْ قَسِيصِينَ وَرُهْبَانًا وَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ (٨٢) وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ
إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَى أَعْيُنَهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ
يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا ءَامَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ (٨٣) وَمَا لَنَا لَا نُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا
جَاءَنَا مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَنَطْمَعُ أَنْ يُدْخِلَنَا رَبَّنَا مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الصَّالِحِينَ (٨٤)
فَأَنبَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا قَالُوا جَنَّتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ (٨٥) وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ
أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ (٨٦)

[المائدة : ٨٢-٨٦]

You will surely find that the bitterest among people in enmity towards the believers are the Jews and those who ascribe partners to Allah; and you will surely find that the closest among them to the believers in affection are those who say: We are Christians. That is because among them are scholars and ascetics, and they are not arrogant (82) When they hear what has been sent down to the Messenger, you see their eyes overflowing with tears, because of what they recognise

as truth therein. They say: Our Lord, we believe; so record us among those who bear witness [to the truth] (83) Why would we not believe in Allah and in the truth that has come to us, when we hope that our Lord will include us among the righteous people? (84) Allah will reward them for their words with gardens through which rivers flow, to abide therein forever. Such is the reward of those who do good (85) But as for those who disbelieve and deny Our revelations, they will be inhabitants of the blazing fire (86)

[Surah al-Ma'idah 5:82-86]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah (*Subhanahu wa Ta 'ala* - Glorified and Exalted is He) tells us of the closer of the two groups to the Muslims and the most likely to be friendly towards them and like them, and those who are least likely to be like that.

{You will surely find that the bitterest among people in enmity towards the believers are the Jews and those who ascribe partners to Allah}. These two groups in general are the most hostile towards Islam and the Muslims, and are the ones who try the hardest to cause harm to them, because of their enmity towards them, which is based on spite, envy, stubbornness and disbelief.

{and you will surely find that the closest among them to the believers in affection are those who say: We are Christians}.

Allah mentions a number of reasons for that:

- **{among them are scholars and ascetics}** that is, ascetic scholars and devoted worshippers in hermitages. Knowledge, asceticism and worship are things that soften the heart and remove hardness and harshness. Hence the harshness of the Jews and the polytheists is not found among the Christians.
- **{and they are not arrogant}** that is, there is no arrogance and conceit, or stubborn refusal to accept the truth, among them. That is what makes them closer to the Muslims and to loving them, because the one who is humble is closer to goodness than the one who is arrogant.
- **{When they hear what has been sent down to the Messenger}** Muhammad ﷺ, that had an impact on their hearts, and they felt awed and their eyes overflowed with tears because of what they heard of the truth of which they were certain. Hence they believed and confirmed that it was true, and they said: **{Our Lord, we believe; so record us among those who bear witness [to the truth]}** - namely the *Ummah* of Muhammad ﷺ. They testify to the oneness of Allah and to the truth of the message that the Messengers brought, and they testify for or against previous nations who either believed or disbelieved.

They are honest and their testimony is to be accepted, as Allah says elsewhere: **{Thus We have made of you an Ummah [nation, community] justly balanced, that you might be**

witnesses over humankind, and the Messenger might be a witness over you...} (al-Baqarah 2: 143)

It is as if they were blamed for hastening to believe, so they said: **{Why would we not believe in Allah and in the truth that has come to us, when we hope that our Lord will include us among the righteous people?}** In other words: what is to prevent us from believing in Allah, when the truth has come to us from our Lord, concerning which there is no doubt, and if we believe and follow the truth, we hope that Allah will admit us to paradise with the righteous people, so what is there to prevent us? Is this not a reason to hasten to believe and not hold back?

{Allah will reward them for their words} that is, for the words of faith that they spoke and for their verbal affirmation of the truth **{with gardens through which rivers flow, to abide therein forever. Such is the reward of those who do good}**.

These verses were revealed concerning the Christians who believed in Muhammad ﷺ, such as the Negus and others. There are still among them those who choose the religion of Islam when it becomes clear to them that what they are following is false. They are closer to Islam than the Jews and the polytheists.

Having mentioned the doers of good, Allah then mentions the punishment of the evildoers: **{But as for those who disbelieve and deny Our revelations, they will be inhabitants of the blazing fire}**, because they disbelieved in Allah and they rejected His revelations which clearly highlight the truth.

(39) Intoxicants, gambling, idols and divining arrows are an abomination.

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَمُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ (٩٠) إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ (٩١)

[المائدة : ٩٠-٩١]

O you believe, intoxicants, gambling, idols and divining arrows are an abomination, of Shaytan's handiwork; therefore, avoid such [abomination], so that you might prosper (90) Shaytan seeks only to stir up enmity and hatred among you, by means of intoxicants and gambling, and to keep you back from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. Will you not then abstain? (91)

[Surah al-Ma'idah 5:90-91]

◆ **Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:**

Here Allah condemns these reprehensible things and tells us that they are of *Shaytan's* handiwork and that they are an abomination, **{therefore avoid such [abomination]}** that is, shun

it, **{so that you might prosper}**. For prosperity cannot be attained except by avoiding that which Allah has prohibited, especially the evils mentioned here, which are:

- **intoxicants (*khamr*)**: this refers to anything that befogs the mind
- **gambling**: this refers to all contests in which both sides offer to give up something if they lose
- **idols**: this refers to statues and the like which are set up and worshipped instead of Allah
- **divining arrows**: which were used for decision-making.

Allah has prohibited these four things; He warns us against them and tells us that they have negative consequences which dictate that they should be shunned and avoided. Those negative consequences include the following:

- They are an abomination; that is, they are evil and metaphorically impure, even if they are not physically impure. We should not contaminate ourselves with the sin and filth of evil things.
- They are of *Shaytan's* handiwork, and he is the most hostile of enemies to humanity. It is well known that one should take precautions against one's enemy and his traps and actions, especially the things he does to ensnare his foe, for that leads to doom. The best thing the individual can do is keep away from the

activities of his avowed enemy, and be careful to avoid falling into his traps.

- No individual can prosper except by avoiding these things. Prosperity means attaining what one seeks and wants, and being saved from what one fears, and these things form an impediment to prosperity.

- These things lead to enmity and resentment among people, and the *Shaytan* is eager to provoke such feelings, especially by means of intoxicants and gambling, in order to stir up enmity and resentment among the believers. Intoxicants befog the mind and lead to loss of reason, which in turn leads to resentment between a person and his fellow believers, especially if that is accompanied by trading insults. This is an inevitable result of drinking, and it may go as far as murder. In the case of gambling, when one defeats the other and takes a lot of his wealth for nothing in return, this is one of the greatest causes of enmity and resentment.

- These things prevent the heart and tongue from remembering Allah and praying, for which man was created and in which is his happiness. Alcohol and gambling form the greatest impediment to that, as they distract the heart and mind until a long time passes without the individual even realizing where he is.

What calamity can be greater and worse than a sin that tarnishes the individual and makes him one of the people of impurity and causes him to follow in the footsteps of the *Shaytan*

and fall into his traps, then he finds himself being led by him like an insignificant animal being led by its shepherd? Thus it is a hindrance to his prosperity and it creates enmity and resentment among the believers; it prevents one from remembering Allah and praying. Can there be any greater negative consequences than this?

Hence Allah instructed people of sound reasoning to abstain from these things, as He says: **{Will you not then abstain?}** If the wise person looks at some of these negative consequences, that will be sufficient to deter him from these things, and there will be no need for further admonition or harsh rebukes.

(40) Whoever Allah wills to guide, He opens his heart to Islam.

قال الله تعالى

فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا كَأَنَّمَا يَصْعَدُ فِي السَّمَاءِ كَذَلِكَ يَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ الرِّجْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

[الأنعام : ١٢٥]

Whoever Allah wills to guide, He opens his heart to Islam, and whomever He wills to leave astray, He closes and constricts his heart, as if he were ascending to heaven. Thus Allah places blight on those who do not believe.

[Surah al-An'aam 6:125]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah describes to His slaves the sign of a person's being blessed and guided, and the sign of his being doomed and misguided. If Allah opens a person's heart to Islam, and it is filled with the light of faith and certainty, so that he feels at ease with it, loves good deeds and finds joy in doing them, and does not find them burdensome, then this is a sign that Allah has guided him and has blessed him with faith and guided him to the straight path.

The sign that Allah has willed to send someone astray is that He makes his heart constricted and unwilling to accept faith, knowledge and certainty. So he becomes overwhelmed with doubts and desires, and nothing good reaches his heart; it is not open to any good deeds because it is constricted as if he is having to climb up to heaven when he has no means of doing so.

Because of this lack of faith, he is the reason why Allah places blight upon him, because he has closed the door of mercy and divine kindness to himself.

This is a measure that never alters. The one who gives in charity and fears Allah, and believes in goodness, Allah will make easy for him the path to ease, but whoever is miserly and thinks that he is self-sufficient, and rejects goodness, Allah will make easy for him the path to hardship.

(41) Verily, this is my path, so follow it.

قال الله تعالى

قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِمَّنْ إِمْلَاقٍ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ وَإِيَّاهُمْ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا أَلْفَوْاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّيْتُكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ (١٥١) وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَأَوْفُوا بِالْكَيْلِ وَالْمِيزَانَ بِالْقِسْطِ لَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا وَإِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَاعْدِلُوا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ وَبِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ أَوْفُوا ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّيْتُكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ (١٥٢) وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّيْتُكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (١٥٣)

[الأنعام : ١٥١-١٥٣]

Say: Come, I will recite to you what your Lord has made binding on you: that you should not ascribe any partner to Him; that you should show kindness to parents; that you should not kill your children because of poverty, for We will provide for you and for them; that you should not approach shameful deeds, whether openly or in secret; that you should not kill, for that is forbidden by Allah, except in the course of

justice. Thus He instructs you, so that you may understand (151) Do not touch the orphan's property, before he comes of age, except to improve it; give full measure and weight, with equity. We do not place on any soul a burden greater than it can bear. And when you speak, be fair, even if it concerns a close relative. And fulfil the covenant of Allah. Thus He instructs you, so that you may pay heed (152) Verily, this is My path, leading straight; follow it, and do not follow [other] paths, lest they cause you to deviate from His path. Thus He instructs you, so that you may protect yourselves [from misguidance] (153)

[Surah al-An'aam 6:151-153]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah says to His Prophet ﷺ: **{Say}** to these people who prohibited that which Allah had made permissible: **{Come, I will recite to you what your Lord has made binding on you}**, the rulings that are binding upon everyone and which include what is prohibited in terms of food, drink, words and actions.

{that you should not ascribe any partner to Him} that is, neither few nor many. The real nature of ascribing partners to Allah is that a created being is worshipped as Allah is to be worshipped, or is venerated as Allah is to be venerated, or is described in terms of any attribute that is unique to Allah in terms of Lordship or divinity. If a person refrains from ascribing partners to Allah in any way, then he becomes a monotheist (one

who affirms the oneness of Allah), sincere towards Him in all his affairs. It is Allah's right over His slaves that they should worship Him alone, and not associate anything with Him.

Then Allah lists the most important rights after His own:

{that you should show kindness to parents} by speaking respectfully and kindly, and doing good deeds. Showing kindness includes any word or deed that benefits one's parents and makes them happy, and if the individual shows kindness to his parents, then there is no disobedience towards them.

{that you should not kill your children} male or female **{because of poverty}** that is, because you are worried about how to provide for them, as happened during the *jahiliyah* when hard-heartedness and injustice prevailed. If they are prohibited to kill their own children in this situation, then killing their children for no reason, or killing the children of others, is even more emphatically prohibited.

{for We will provide for you and for them} that is, We have guaranteed the provision of all. You are not the ones who provide for your children or even for yourselves, so there is no need to worry about them.

{that you should not approach shameful deeds} - this refers to major sins that are regarded as obscene or repugnant

{whether openly or in secret} - this refers to actions that are visible and those that have to do with thoughts and

intentions. The prohibition on approaching shameful deeds is more effective than a prohibition on merely doing them, because it includes a prohibition on their precursors and the means that lead to them.

{that you should not kill, for that is forbidden by Allah} this refers to killing any Muslim, male or female, young or old, righteous or evildoer, or killing a non-Muslim who is protected by a covenant with the Muslims

{except in the course of justice} such as the previously-married adulterer, cases of murder, or one who leaves his religion and splits from the main body of Muslims.

{Thus He instructs you} and enjoins what is mentioned above **{so that you may understand}** His instructions, then pay attention to them and adhere to them.

This verse indicates that the individual's compliance with the commands of Allah will be commensurate with his level of understanding.

{Do not touch the orphan's property} by consuming it or replacing it with your wealth in an unfair manner, or taking it for no reason **{before he}** that is, the orphan **{comes of age}** that is, reaches maturity and knows how to handle it. When he reaches maturity, he may be given his wealth at that point and he may dispose of it as he sees fit.

{except to improve it} that is, except in the event that you are trying to improve their wealth, so that they may benefit from it. This indicates that it is not permissible to touch the orphan's property or dispose of it in a manner that is detrimental to the orphan, or in a manner that, although it is not detrimental to him, is not in his best interests either.

This indicates that the orphan - before he comes of age - is not allowed to dispose of his wealth and that his guardian may dispose of his wealth in the manner that is best, and this ruling comes to an end when the orphan comes of age.

{give full measure and weight, with equity} that is, on the basis of fairness and honesty. If you strive hard in that, then **{We do not place on any soul a burden greater than it can bear}** that is, as much as it is able to bear, and not too much. So if anyone strives hard to be honest in terms of measures and weights, then falls short without realising, and without being negligent, then Allah is Oft-Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving.

The scholars of *usool* quoted this and similar verses as evidence that Allah does not burden anyone with more than he can bear, and that if a person fears Allah with regard to His commands, and does whatever he can, then there is no blame on him for anything beyond that.

{And when you speak} in the event of judging between people and putting an end to their disputes, or you comment on their views or their situations, then **{be fair}** in what you say, by

paying attention to being truthful both regarding those whom you like and those whom you dislike, and by being fair and not concealing that which needs to be disclosed, for being biased against someone because you dislike him or some of his views constitutes wrongdoing, which is prohibited.

In fact, when a scholar discusses the views of the innovators, what he is required to do is give credit where it is due, and to explain what there is of truth or falsehood in their statements and to take into consideration how close to or far from the truth it is.

The *fuqaha* (jurists) have stated that the *qadi* (judge) must be fair and equitable towards both disputants in the way he speaks to them and looks at them.

{And fulfil the covenant of Allah} that includes the covenant which He has made with His slaves, according to which they must fulfil His rights, as well as the covenants that people make with one another. All covenants must be fulfilled and it is prohibited to break any covenant or fail to fulfil it properly.

{Thus} that is, the rulings mentioned above

{He instructs you, so that you may pay heed} to what He has explained to you of rulings, and so that you may carry out His instructions properly and learn the wisdom behind them and the rulings concerning them.

Having explained many of the major rulings and important laws, Allah then refers to them and to that which is more comprehensive and general than them, as He says: **{Verily, this is My path, leading straight}** that is, these and similar rulings, which Allah has explained in His Book and made clear to His slaves, are the path of Allah that leads to Him and to paradise; it is a moderate, easy and straightforward

{follow it} in order to attain success and prosperity, and to fulfil your hopes

{and do not follow [other] paths} that is, paths that are contrary to this path

{lest they cause you to deviate from His path} that is, lead you astray and cause you to deviate right and left. For if you go astray from the straight path, there is nothing else but paths that lead to hell.

{Thus He instructs you, so that you may protect yourselves [from misguidance]} if you do what Allah has explained to you, by learning it and acting upon it, you will be among the pious and successful slaves of Allah. The path is described in the singular and as being His because there is only one path that leads to Him, and Allah is the One Who helps those who follow it to adhere to it.

(42) Verily my prayer, my sacrifice, my living and my dying are all for Allah.

قال الله تعالى

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (١٦٢)

لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ (١٦٣)

[الأنعام : ١٦٢-١٦٣]

Say [O Muhammad]: Verily my prayer, my sacrifice, my living and my dying are all for Allah, the Lord of the worlds (162) No partner has He. Thus I am commanded, and I am the first of those who submit to Allah [in Islam] (163)

[Surah al-An'aam 6:162-163]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Allah singles out for mention the noblest acts of worship, as He says: **{Say [O Muhammad]: Verily my prayer, my sacrifice}** - this is because of the virtue of these two acts of worship and what they imply of loving Allah, devoting worship sincerely to Him alone and drawing closer to Him in one's heart and by means of one's words and actions. Sacrifice means giving up what one loves of wealth or property for that which is dearer to one, namely Allah. If a person is sincere in his prayer and

sacrifice, he will inevitably be sincere towards Allah in all his deeds.

{my living and my dying} that is, whatever I do in my life and whatever Allah decrees should happen to me, and what He decrees for me at the time of my death, all of that is **{for Allah, the Lord of the worlds; No partner has He}** in worship, just as He has no partner in sovereignty and control.

This sincerity towards Allah is not something that I have made up by myself; rather **{Thus I am commanded}** - it is enjoined upon me and I have no choice but to comply

{and I am the first of those who submit to Allah [in Islam]} of this *Ummah*.

(43) You approach men with lust instead of women; you are indeed a people transgressing beyond all bounds.

قال الله تعالى

وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ ۖ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ (٨٠) إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِّنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ ۚ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ (٨١) وَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ ۖ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِّنْ قَرْيَتِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ أَنَاسٌ يَّتَطَهَّرُونَ (٨٢) فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ ۖ إِلَّا أَمْرَأَتَهُ ۚ كَانَتْ مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ (٨٣) وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا ۖ فَأَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ (٨٤)

[الأعراف : ٨٠-٨٤]

And We also sent Loot. He said to his people: Do you commit this shameful deed that no one in the world has ever committed before you? (80) For you approach men with lust instead of women; you are indeed a people transgressing beyond all bounds (81) But the only response his people gave was to say: Drive them out of your city, for they are indeed people who want to keep themselves clean and pure (82) So we saved him and his family, except his wife; she was one of those who stayed behind (83) And We let loose upon them a shower [of stones]. So see what was the fate of the evildoers (84)

[Surah al-A'raf 7:80-84]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{And We also sent Loot}. That is, We sent him to his people to instruct them to worship Allah alone and to forbid to them the shameful deed that no one in the world had ever done before them.

{He said to his people: Do you commit this shameful deed} that is, the deed which surpasses, in its severity and abhorrent nature, all other shameful deeds

{that no one in the world has ever committed before you}. It was one of the most repulsive of deeds, and their invention of it, thus setting the precedent for those who came after them, was also one of the most abhorrent of deeds.

Then he explained further: **{For you approach men with lust instead of women}** that is, you ignore women, whom Allah has created for you, when you could find in them pleasure to fulfil your desire in a manner that is in accordance with sound human nature, and instead you prefer anal intercourse with men, which is something utterly filthy and abhorrent, for the anus is the place from which filth emerges, that one feels embarrassed to mention, let alone touch and be close to it.

{you are indeed a people transgressing beyond all bounds} that is, people who overstep the limits set by Allah in the most audacious manner.

{But the only response his people gave was to say: Drive them out of your city, for they are indeed people who want to keep themselves clean and pure} That is, they want to keep away from committing shameful deeds.

{Their only grievance against them was that they believed in Allah, the Almighty, the Praiseworthy} (al-Burooj 85: 8)

{So we saved him and his family, except his wife; she was one of those who stayed behind} that is, those who remained behind and were punished. Allah instructed him to take his family and leave at night, for the punishment would come upon his people in the morning, so he took his family, except his wife, who met the same fate as they did.

{And We let loose upon them a shower [of stones]} that is, a shower of hot stones of baked clay, and Allah turned the city upside down.

{So see what was the fate of the evildoers}, namely destruction and eternal disgrace.

(44) To Allah belong the most beautiful names, so call on Him by them.

قال الله تعالى

وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا وَذَرُوا الَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ
سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

[الأعراف : ١٨٠]

To Allah belong the most beautiful names, so call on Him by them, and keep away from those who profane His names. They will be requited for what they do.

[Surah al-A'raf 7:180]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This is indicative of the greatness of His glory and attributes, for to Him belong the most beautiful names. In other words, all good names are His. What this refers to is every name that is indicative of an attribute of perfection and greatness. This is why they are called beautiful, because if they did not refer to an attribute, and were merely information, they would not be beautiful. Similarly, if they referred to attributes of imperfection or attributes that may be praiseworthy or otherwise, then they would not be beautiful. Each of His names points to the meaning of that attribute in the most complete and comprehensive manner, and includes all its shades of meaning.

For example, the name *al-'Aleem* (the All-Knowing) indicates that He has all-encompassing knowledge of all things, so nothing, not even the weight of an atom on earth or in heaven, is beyond His knowledge.

The name *ar-Raheem* (the Most Merciful) indicates that He is possessed of great mercy that encompasses all things.

The name *al-Qadeer* (the Omnipotent, All-Powerful) indicates that He is possessed of all-encompassing power and nothing is beyond His power, and so on.

Another aspect of the beauty of these names is that He cannot be called except by these names. Hence He says: **{so call on Him by them}**. This includes the supplication of worship and the supplication of asking. So He is to be called upon for everything that is needed, in a manner that is appropriate to the need in question.

So the one who calls upon Him may say, for example: O Allah, forgive me and have mercy on me, for You are the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful. Accept my repentance, O Acceptor of repentance. Grant me provision, O Provider. Show me kindness, O Most Kind - and so on.

{and keep away from those who profane His names. They will be requited for what they do} that is, as a penalty and punishment for profaning His names. What that means is misusing the name and calling by these names those who do not deserve them, as the polytheists do when naming their false

gods; or denying their meanings and distorting them, giving meanings that were not intended by Allah or His Messenger ﷺ; or likening the divine attributes to the attributes of some created being. What one must do is beware of profaning these names and beware of those who profane them. It is proven in *as-Saheeh* that the Prophet ﷺ said: **«Allah has ninety-nine names; whoever learns them by heart will enter paradise.»** (Bukhari, Muslim, at-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah)

(45) The true believers are only those who...

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ
آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

[الأنفال : ٢]

The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts become fearful, and when His verses are recited to them, it increases them in faith; and upon their Lord they rely.

[Surah al-Anfal 8:2]

◆ **Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:**

{The true believers} who adhere to all the teachings of faith **{are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts become fearful}** that is, they are filled with fear and awe, and that fear of Allah dictates that they should refrain from that which is prohibited. Fear of Allah is one of the greatest signs that restrain one from committing sin.

{and when His verses are recited to them, it increases them in faith} the reason being that they listen to it with presence of mind, contemplating the meaning, and as a result of that their faith increases, because contemplation is one of the

actions of the heart, and it is inevitable that they will learn a meaning that they did not know, or they will be reminded of something that they had forgotten, or it will make their hearts inclined towards good and make them long for the reward of their Lord, or will make them fear His punishment, or they will be deterred from sin. All of these are things that increase one in faith.

{and upon their Lord they rely} alone, with no partner or associate. In other words, they rely in their hearts on their Lord to bring what is in their best interests and ward off that which may harm them in spiritual or worldly terms, and they trust that Allah will do that. Trust in Allah is the motive for all good deeds, which cannot exist or be completed without it.

(46) If you fear Allah, He will grant you a criterion

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّكُمْ فُرْقَانًا وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ
سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

[الأنفال : ٢٩]

O you who believe, if you fear Allah, He will grant you a criterion and will remove from you your misdeeds and forgive you. And Allah is the possessor of great bounty.

[Surah al-Anfal 8:29]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Complying and fearing Allah is the way to, and the sign of, blessings and success. Allah has made a connection between fear of Him and a great deal of good in this world and the hereafter. Here He says that the one who fears Allah will attain **four** things, each one of which is better than this world and all that is in it:

The **first** is insight (*furqan*), which is knowledge and guidance, by means of which one may differentiate between true guidance and misguidance, truth and falsehood, lawful and prohibited, those who are blessed and those who are doomed.

The **second** and **third** are expiation of bad deeds and forgiveness of sins. Each of these is included with the other when

either of them is mentioned on its own. When they are mentioned together, expiation of bad deeds has to do with minor sins and forgiveness of sins has to do with expiation of major sins.

The **fourth** is the great reward for the one who fears Him and gives precedence to pleasing Him over his own whims and desires, **{And Allah is the possessor of great bounty}**.

(47) Sufficient for you is Allah

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَسْبُكَ اللَّهُ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

[الأنفال : ٦٤]

O Prophet, sufficient for you is Allah and for whoever follows you of the believers.

[Surah al-Anfal 8:64]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Then Allah says: **{O Prophet, sufficient for you is Allah and for whoever follows you of the believers}** that is, He will take care of you and your followers among the believers. This is a promise from Allah to His believing slaves who follow His Messenger ﷺ, that He will suffice them and support them against their enemies.

Therefore, if they take proper measures, namely believing and following the Prophet ﷺ, then He will inevitably suffice them with regard to that which concerns them of both spiritual and worldly matters. That support is not granted only when its conditions are not met.

(48) The eight categories of those who are entitled to Zakah

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ
وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَرَمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَآبَنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

[التوبة : ٦٠]

Zakah [alms] is only for the poor and those in need; those who work to collect it; those whose hearts are to be won over; for the freeing of slaves; for debtors; for the cause of Allah; and for wayfarers. [Thus it is] ordained by Allah, and Allah is All-Knowing, Most Wise.

[Surah at-Tawbah 9:60]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{Zakah [alms]} - This refers to obligatory charity, based on the fact that charity may be given to everyone, and is not to be given only to some in exclusion of others. What is meant here is that *zakah* (obligatory charity) is only for the categories mentioned in this verse, and is not for others, because Allah has limited it to these categories, of which there are **eight**.

The **first** and **second** categories are the poor and those in need. In this context, these words refer to two different categories. Those who are **{poor}** are in greater need than those who are **{in need}**, because Allah started with them, and He only starts with the most important, then the next most important. So the word translated here as **{poor}** refers to those who cannot find anything, or who can only find less than half of what they need. The word translated here as **{those in need}** refers to those who can find half or more of what they need, but they cannot find everything they need, because if they could do that, they would be independent of means. These people are to be given *zakah* so that they will no longer be poor or in need.

The **third** category is **{those who work to collect it}**. This refers to everyone who is involved in that, such as those who work it out, collect it from those who give it, take care of it, carry it, write it down and so on. They are to be given a share of it because of their work; this is a payment for the work they do with regard to it.

The **fourth** category is **{those whose hearts are to be won over}**. The one whose heart is to be won over is a leader who is obeyed among his people, who it is hoped will become Muslim, or whose evil is feared, or it is hoped that by giving to him his faith will become stronger or others of similar standing will become Muslim. Such people may be given whatever will achieve the purpose of winning them over.

The **fifth** category is **{the freeing of slaves}**. This refers to the *mukatibs*, who are slaves who want to buy their freedom from their masters, so they are striving to acquire enough wealth to ransom themselves. They may be given *zakah* for that purpose. This also includes ransoming Muslim slaves who are held captive by the disbelievers; in fact, that is even more important. The freeing of slaves does not necessarily have to be done in this exact manner; it may be done in other ways too.

The **sixth** category is **{debtors}**, who are of **two** types:

1. Those who go into debt as a result of their efforts to bring about reconciliation. This refers to situations where there is trouble between two groups of people, so a man intervenes to bring about reconciliation between them, by offering money to one of them or to all of them. He may be given a share of *zakah*, by way of encouraging him and making him more steadfast. He may be given *zakah* even if he is rich.
2. Those who go into debt then fall on hard times. Such a person may be given *zakah* to pay off his debt.

The **seventh** category is those who fight for **{the cause of Allah}**. This refers to voluntary fighters who are not listed in the official army rolls. They may be given *zakah* to help them prepare for their campaign, to purchase weapons and mounts, or to cover the maintenance of themselves and their families, so that they can focus on *jihad* and be reassured (of their families' welfare in their absence).

Many of the *fuqaha* said that if a person is able to earn a living but he devotes all his time to seeking knowledge, he may be given *zakah*, because seeking knowledge comes under the heading of *jihad* in Allah's cause.

They also said that it is permissible to give *zakah* to the poor so that they may perform the obligatory *Hajj*, but this is subject to further discussion.

The **eighth** category is **{wayfarers}**. This refers to the stranger who is cut off in a foreign land. He may be given *zakah* to enable him to reach his homeland.

These eight categories are the only ones to whom *zakah* may be given.

{[Thus it is] ordained by Allah} that is, He has decreed it and imposed it on the basis of His knowledge and wisdom **{and Allah is All-Knowing, Most Wise}**.

It should be noted that these eight categories may be reduced to **two**:

- 1.** People who are given for their own needs and benefit, such as the poor, those in need, and so on.
- 2.** People who are given because there is a need for them and Islam can benefit from them.

Allah has enjoined this share of the wealth of the rich, in order to meet individual and public needs of Islam and the Muslims. If the rich were to give the *zakah* of their wealth in the

prescribed manner, there would be no poor people left among the Muslims, and enough money would be collected to support those who guard the borders and strive in *jihad* against the disbelievers, and all religious interests would thus be met.

(49) The Muhajiroon, Ansar, and those who follow them.

قال الله تعالى

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ
بِإِحْسَنِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

[التوبة : ١٠٠]

As for the first and foremost to believe, the Muhajiroon and Ansar, and those who follow them in doing righteous deeds, Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. He has prepared for them gardens through which rivers flow, to abide therein forever. That is the supreme triumph.

[Surah at-Tawbah 9:100]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

The first and foremost to believe are the first generation of this *Ummah*, who hastened to believe, migrate, strive in *jihad* and establish the religion of Allah.

{the Muhajiroon} who:

{...who have been driven from their homes and property, seeking grace from Allah and His good pleasure, and helping the cause of Allah and His Messenger. It is they whose faith is true.} (al-Hashr 59: 8)

{and Ansar} who:

{... were already settled in the land [of Madinah] before them, and were sincere in faith, love the Muhajiroon who came to them, and find no covetous desire in their hearts for what they have been given. Rather they give them preference over themselves, even if they too are poor...} (al-Hashr 59: 9)

{and those who follow them in doing righteous deeds} that is, in terms of beliefs, words and actions. These are the ones who are free of blame and who deserved to attain the best praise and honor from Allah.

{Allah is pleased with them} and His pleasure is greater than the delights of paradise

{and they are pleased with Him. He has prepared for them gardens through which rivers flow} to irrigate the lush and beautiful gardens.

{to abide therein forever} - they will never want to leave and they will never ask for any change, because whatever they wish for they will get and whatever they want they will find.

{That is the supreme triumph} whereby they will attain everything they hope for and everything that will bring them delight and pleasure, and all harms will be warded off from them.

(50) Give glad tidings to the believers

قال الله تعالى

التَّائِبُونَ الْعَابِدُونَ الْحَامِدُونَ السَّائِحُونَ الرَّاكِعُونَ السَّاجِدُونَ
الْأَمْرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّاهُونَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَالْحَافِظُونَ لِحُدُودِ اللَّهِ
وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

[التوبة : ١١٢]

[Those believers] are the ones who repent to Allah, worship Him, praise Him, fast, bow and prostrate, enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and observe the limits set by Allah.

So give glad tidings to the believers.

[Surah at-Tawbah 9:112]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

It is as if it was said: Who are the believers who have glad tidings from Allah of admission to paradise and attaining honor? So He said: They are:

{[Those believers] are the ones who repent to Allah} constantly and at all times from all kinds of sin

{worship Him} that is, their characteristic is servitude to Allah and constantly obeying Him by doing obligatory and recommended acts at all times; thus a person becomes one of those who worship Allah,

{praise Him} at times of hardship and of ease, and they acknowledge the rights that Allah has over them because of the blessings He bestows, both apparent and hidden; they praise Allah by remembering His blessings and they remember Him during the night and during the day.

{fast} the word translated here as 'fasting' may also refer to travelling in pursuit of knowledge; thus it is understood as referring to the heart taking a spiritual journey to know Allah and love Him, turning constantly to Him. However, the correct view is that what is meant is travelling for the purpose of doing good deeds, such as *hajj* and *'umrah*, *jihad*, seeking knowledge, upholding ties of kinship, and the like.

{bow and prostrate} that is, they pray a great deal, for the prayer includes bowing and prostrating

{enjoin what is right} which includes all obligatory and recommended acts

{and forbid what is wrong} which includes everything that Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have forbidden.

{and observe the limits set by Allah} by learning the content of that which Allah has revealed to His Messenger ﷺ and what it includes of commands, prohibitions and rulings, and what it does not include, so that they adhere to it by doing what it enjoins and refraining from what it forbids.

{So give glad tidings to the believers} No mention is made of what the glad tidings refer to, hence it includes everything that results from faith of reward in this world and the hereafter. Hence the glad tidings are applicable to every believer. As for the amount and nature of that reward, that is according to each believer's degree of faith, how strong or weak it is, and the extent to which he acts upon it.

(51) There has come to you a Messenger from among yourselves

قال الله تعالى

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ
بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

[التوبة : ١٢٨]

There has come to you a Messenger from among yourselves; it grieves him that you suffer, and he is full of concern for you; and towards the believers he is compassionate and merciful.

[Surah at-Tawbah 9:128]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah reminds His believing slaves of how He sent to them the unlettered Prophet ﷺ who was one of their own; they knew him and were able to learn from him, and they would not refrain from following him. He ﷺ was very sincere towards them and strove hard in their best interests.

{it grieves him that you suffer} that is, whatever upsets you and makes you suffer upsets him

{and he is full of concern for you}. He loves good for you, strives his utmost to achieve it for you, and is very keen that you

should be guided to faith. He hates evil for you and strives to turn you away from it.

{and towards the believers he is compassionate and merciful} that is, he is extremely kind to them, and is more compassionate towards them than their parents. Hence his rights take precedence over the rights of all other people. The *Ummah* is obliged to believe in him, venerate him, respect him and honor him ﷺ.

(52) The Allies and Close Friends of Allah

قال الله تعالى

أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ (٦٢) الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا
وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ (٦٣) لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَىٰ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ
لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ (٦٤)

[يونس : ٦٢-٦٤]

Verily the allies and close friends of Allah will have no fear nor
will they grieve (62) Those who believe and guard against evil
(63) For them are glad tidings in the life of this world and in
the hereafter; there can be no change in the words [promises]
of Allah. That is the supreme triumph (64)

[Surah Yunus 10:62-64]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allāh have mercy on him] said:

{For them are glad tidings in the life of this world and in
the hereafter} Glad tidings in this world means being spoken
well of, praised and loved by the believers. It also includes good
dreams, and the kindness that Allah shows to him by enabling
him to do the best of deeds and acquire the best of
characteristics, and by diverting from him bad characteristics.

In the hereafter, the first glad tidings the believers receive
are at the time when their souls are taken in death, as Allah says:

{Verily, those who say: Our Lord is Allah, then remain steadfast, to them the angels will come down [at the time of death, saying]: Fear not, nor grieve; but receive the glad tidings of paradise which you were promised} [Fussilat 41: 30]

After that, in the grave they receive the glad tidings of the good pleasure of Allah and eternal bliss.

Then in the hereafter they will receive the ultimate glad tidings of admission to the gardens of bliss and salvation from the painful punishment.

(53) Allah does not set right the work of the corruptors

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُصْلِحُ عَمَلَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

[يونس : ٨١]

Allah certainly does not set right the work of the corruptors

[Surah Yunus 10:81]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allāh have mercy on him] said:

This applies to anyone who causes corruption who does and plans anything. His deeds will come to naught and fail. Even if what he does may meet with some measure of success at some time, ultimately it will diminish and be destroyed.

As for those who do good, seeking thereby the Countenance of Allah and they do beneficial deeds that are enjoined, Allah will guide them, and refine their deeds, and cause their reward to grow and develop.

(54) Say O Muhammad: This is my way; I call to Allah on the basis of clear evidence...

قال الله تعالى

قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

[يوسف : ١٠٨]

Say [O Muhammad]: This is my way; I call to Allah on the basis of clear evidence - I and those who follow me. Glory be to Allah! And I am not one of those who ascribe partners to Allah.

[Surah Yusuf 12:108]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah says to His Prophet Muhammad ﷺ: **{Say}** to the people **{This is my way}** that is, my way to which I call; it is the way that leads to Allah and to paradise, the way that is based on knowledge of the truth, acting upon it and giving it precedence, and based on devoting worship to Allah alone with no partner or associate.

{I call to Allah} that is, I urge and encourage people to turn to their Lord, and I warn them against that which keeps them away from Him.

Moreover, I do that **{on the basis of clear evidence}** for my religion, that is, on the basis of knowledge and certainty beyond any shadow of a doubt, about which there are no reservations. And, likewise, **{those who follow me}** also call to Allah as I do, on the basis of certainty.

So **{Glory be to Allah}**, and exalted be He far above what is attributed to Him that is not befitting to His Majesty or is contrary to His perfection.

{And I am not one of those who ascribe partners to Allah} in any of my affairs; rather I worship Allah, devoting my worship sincerely to Him alone.

(55) Verily Allah does not change the condition of a people until they themselves change

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ

[الرعد : ١١]

Verily Allah does not change the condition of a people until they themselves change their own attitude and conduct.

[Surah ar-Ra'd 13:11]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{Verily Allah does not change the condition of a people} in terms of blessings, bounty and prosperity

{until they themselves change their own attitude and conduct} by shifting from faith to disbelief, from obedience to disobedience, or from gratitude for the blessings of Allah to insolence because of them; in such cases Allah takes those blessings away from them.

By the same token, if people change their condition of sin, and shift towards obedience to Allah, Allah will change the miserable situation in which they were to one of blessing, happiness, joy and mercy.

**(56) Those who believe and whose hearts are assured
by the remembrance of Allah**

قال الله تعالى

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

[الرعد : ٢٨]

**Those who believe and whose hearts are assured by the
remembrance of Allah. Unquestionably, by the remembrance
of Allah hearts are assured.**

[Surah ar-Ra'd 13:28]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Allah describes the sign of the believers:

**{Those who believe and whose hearts are assured by the
remembrance of Allah}** that is, their anxiety and worries are
dispelled and replaced with joy and pleasure.

**{Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah hearts are
assured}** that is, this is their nature and it is to be expected that
they would not find comfort in anything except remembrance of
Allah, for nothing brings greater pleasure to the heart and
nothing is more desirable or sweeter than loving the Creator,
feeling close to Him and knowing Him. According to how much
the heart knows and loves Allah, it will remember Him to that

degree. This is based on the assumption that what is meant by remembrance of Allah is when a person remembers his Lord (*dhikr*) by glorifying Him, proclaiming His oneness, magnifying Him and so on.

It was also suggested that what is meant by the remembrance of Allah is His Book that He sent down as a reminder to the believers.

Based on that, what is meant by hearts finding comfort in the remembrance of Allah is that when the heart comes to know the meanings and rulings of the Qur'an, it feels reassured by them, for they point to clear truth that is supported by evidence and proof. Thus the hearts are reassured, for they cannot find reassurance except by means of certainty and knowledge, which is found in the Book of Allah that is certainly complete and perfect. As for other books that are not based on it, the heart does not feel at ease with them; rather the heart will remain troubled because of the contradictory nature of their evidence and rulings.

(57) Never think that Allah is unaware of what the evildoers are doing

قال الله تعالى

**وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفِلًا عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنَّمَا يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ
تَشْخَصُ فِيهِ الْأَبْصَارُ (٤٢) مُهْطِعِينَ مُقْنِعِي رُءُوسِهِمْ لَا يَرْتَدُّ إِلَيْهِمْ
طَرْفُهُمْ وَأَفْئِدَتُهُمْ هَوَاءٌ (٤٣)**

[إبراهيم : ٤٢-٤٣]

Never think that Allah is unaware of what the evildoers are doing; He is only giving them respite until a day when the eyes will stare fixedly [in horror]. (42) They will rush headlong, heads raised, eyes unblinking and hearts void. (43)

[Surah Ibrahim 14:42-43]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This is a stern threat to the wrongdoers and consolation to those who are wronged.

{Never think that Allah is unaware of what the evildoers are doing} when He gives them respite and grants them ample provision, allowing them to travel in the land safely and with ease. This is not an indication that they are in a good state, for Allah gives respite to the wrongdoer and gives him more time so

that he may increase in sin until, when He seizes him, He will not let him go.

{Such is the punishment of your Lord, when He punishes the cities that are given to wrongdoing; verily His punishment is painful and severe} (Hood 11: 102)

Here wrongdoing includes wrongdoing towards one's Lord (that is, sin) and wrongdoing towards the slaves of Allah.

{He is only giving them respite until a day when the eyes will stare fixedly [in horror]} that is, the eyes will not blink because of the intensity of the horrors and disturbing turmoil that they see.

{They will rush headlong} that is, they will hasten to respond to the caller when he summons them to appear before Allah for the reckoning, and they will have no option to refuse and no escape or refuge

{heads raised} that is, their hands will be tied to their chins, and as a result their heads will be raised

{eyes unblinking and hearts void} that is, their hearts will have risen to the throats, and they will be overwhelmed with worry, distress, grief and anxiety.

**(58) Verily We have sent down the Qur'an and We will
preserve it**

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

[الحجر : ٩]

**Verily it is We Who have sent down the Reminder [the
Qur'an], and verily it is We Who will preserve it.**

[Surah al-Hijr 15:9]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

**{Verily it is We Who have sent down the Reminder [the
Qur'an]}** in which there is a reminder of all things, and clear
proof, by means of which a person will be reminded if he wants
to be reminded.

{and verily it is We Who will preserve it} at the time of
revelation and after its revelation. At the time of revelation,
Allah protected it from the tampering of any accursed devil, and
after revelation Allah deposited it in the heart of His Messenger
ﷺ, where it took root, then it was deposited in the hearts of his
Ummah. Allah protected its words from being changed and from
anything being added or subtracted, and He protected its
meanings from alteration. So no one can distort any of its

meanings but Allah will inspire scholars who will highlight the true meaning. This is one of the greatest signs of Allah, and one of His blessings to His believing slaves.

Another way in which Allah protects it is that He protected people from their enemies, and no enemy will be given the upper hand in such a way that he will eradicate them.

(59) We have sent down to you the Book explaining all things

قال الله تعالى

**وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ ۖ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ شَهِيدًا
عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ ۚ وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً
وَبُشْرَى لِّلْمُسْلِمِينَ**

[النحل : ٨٩]

On the day when We raise up from every nation, a witness against them from amongst themselves, We will bring you [O Muhammad] as a witness against these [your people]. And We have sent down to you the Book, explaining all things, and as guidance, mercy and glad tidings for the Muslims.

[Surah an-Nahl 16:89]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

As this Qur'an explains all things, it constitutes the proof of Allah against all people. Therefore, it has left no excuse for the wrongdoers, and the Muslims benefitted from it, as it became a source of guidance for them, by which they are guided with regard to all their affairs, both religious and worldly. It is also a mercy for them, through which they attain all good in this world and the hereafter.

Guidance is that by means of which they attain beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds, and mercy is what results from that of reward in this world and the hereafter, such as spiritual well-being, a sense of reassurance, perfection of reasoning which cannot be perfected unless it is based on the meanings of the Qur'an, which are the most sublime meanings, good deeds, good manners, abundant provision, victory over enemies in word and deed, and attaining the pleasure of Allah and His paradise, in which are eternal blessings such as no one knows except the Most Merciful Lord.

**(60) Verily Allah enjoins justice, kindness and giving
kinsfolk their due...**

قال الله تعالى

**إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَنِ وَإِيتَائِي ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَيَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ
وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ**

[النحل : ٩٠]

**Verily Allah enjoins justice, kindness and giving kinsfolk [their
due], and He forbids obscenity, wickedness and wrongdoing.
He admonishes you, so that you may pay heed.**

[Surah an-Nahl 16:90]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Justice is obligatory and kindness is a virtue that is encouraged, such as benefitting people by means of wealth, physical actions, knowledge and other ways of benefitting them. That even includes kindness to animals, including those whose flesh it is permissible to eat and others.

Allah singles out giving kinsfolk their due - even though this is included in the general meaning - so as to emphasize the importance of their rights and encourage fulfilment thereof, because it is a must to uphold ties with them and show kindness towards them. This includes all relatives, both close and distant;

the more closely related they are, the more deserving they are of kindness.

{and He forbids obscenity} - this refers to every major sin that is regarded as abhorrent according to religious teachings and sound human nature, such as ascribing partners to Allah, unlawful killing, fornication and adultery, stealing, self-admiration, arrogance, looking down on people, and other evil deeds. Wickedness includes all kinds of sins that have to do with the rights of Allah. Wrongdoing includes all kinds of transgression against people, whether that has to do with their lives, their wealth or their honor.

This verse is concise and includes all that is enjoined and prohibited; there is nothing that is not included. This is a basic principle to which all minor issues are connected. Anything that involves justice, kindness or giving kinsfolk their due comes under the heading of that which Allah has enjoined; anything that involves obscenity, wickedness or wrongdoing comes under the heading of that which Allah has forbidden. Thus we see the goodness and beauty of that which Allah has enjoined, and the evil and ugliness of that which He has prohibited. Everything that people say or do is to be measured by this standard. Blessed be the One Who put in His words guidance, healing, light and the criterion to distinguish between good and evil in all things.

(61) We will grant them a good life

قال الله تعالى

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ
وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

[النحل : ٩٧]

Whoever does righteous deeds, male or female, and is a believer, We will surely grant him a good life, and We will surely grant them their reward according to the best of their deeds.

[Surah an-Nahl 16:97]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{Whoever does righteous deeds, male or female, and is a believer} therefore faith is a condition of the validity and acceptance of righteous deeds. In fact, a deed cannot be called righteous unless it is done on the basis of faith, and the faith which inspires one to do good deeds is certain faith that leads to physical actions, both obligatory and recommended. Whoever combines faith and righteous deeds,

{We will surely grant him a good life} by instilling reassurance and tranquility in his heart, so that he will not pay attention to anything that could cause him any disturbance, and

Allah will grant him provision that is lawful and good from where he does not expect.

{and We will surely grant them} in the hereafter **{their reward according to the best of their deeds}**, a reward of all types of pleasures such as no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever crossed the mind of man. So Allah will give him good in this world and good in the hereafter.

**(62) Invite to the way of your Lord on the basis of
wisdom and goodly exhortation**

قال الله تعالى

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ ۚ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ
أَحْسَنُ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ۚ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ
[النحل : ١٢٥]

Invite to the way of your Lord on the basis of wisdom and goodly exhortation, and reason with them in the most courteous manner. Verily your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His path, and He knows best who is rightly guided.

[Surah an-Nahl 16:125]

◆ **Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:**

That is, let your call to all people, Muslims and disbelievers, inviting them to the straight path of your Lord, which includes beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds, be **{on the basis of wisdom}** addressing each according to his situation and ability to understand, and the level of his acceptance and submission.

Therefore, the call to Islam should be based on knowledge, not ignorance, starting with the most important matters, then the next most important, issues that are clearer in the mind and

easier to understand, and are more likely to be fully accepted, presenting the call with kindness and gentleness.

If the person called responds to that approach which is based on wisdom, all well and good; otherwise the caller may use goodly exhortation, which is enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, accompanied by encouragement and warnings, pointing out and listing what interests one may attain by adhering to the commands, and what harms one may incur by indulging in that which is prohibited.

It may also involve pointing out the honor of the one who adheres to the religion of Allah and the disgrace of the one who does not do so, or describing what Allah has prepared of reward in this world and the hereafter for those who are obedient to Him and what He has prepared of punishment in this world and the hereafter for those who are disobedient to Him.

If the person to whom the call is addressed thinks that what he is following is truth or if he is a promoter of falsehood, then the caller to Islam should reason with him in the most courteous manner. These are the ways which are more likely to bring a response, according to both reason and the texts.

One way of doing that is to use evidence that he believes is sound, because this is more likely to achieve the goal and not lead to argument or trading of insults, which will defeat the purpose and is of no benefit. Rather the aim is to guide people to the truth, not to prove them wrong and the likes.

**(63) Verily this Qur'an guides to that which is most just
and upright**

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ
الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا

[الإسراء : ٩]

**Verily this Qur'an guides to that which is most just and right,
and gives glad tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds
that theirs will be a great reward.**

[Surah al-Isra' 17:9]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah tells us of the noble status and grandeur of the Qur'an, and that it **{guides to that which is most just and right}** that is, that which is most upright and sublime of beliefs, deeds and attitudes. Whoever follows that which the Qur'an promotes will be the most perfect and upright of people, and the most guided in all his affairs.

{and gives glad tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds}, both obligatory and supererogatory, {that theirs will be a great reward} which Allah has prepared for them in His paradise, the description of which no one knows except Him.

**(64) Your Lord has ordained that you should worship
none but Him and show kindness to parents**

قال الله تعالى

**وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۚ إِنَّمَا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ
الْكِبَرُ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أَفٌّ وَلَا تَنْهَرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا
كَرِيمًا (٢٣) وَأَخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا
كَمَا رَبَّبَانِي صَغِيرًا (٢٤)**

[الإسراء : ٢٣-٢٤]

**Your Lord has ordained that you should worship none but Him
and show kindness to parents. If one or both of them reach
old age in your care, do not say to them even the mildest
word of annoyance or reproach them; rather speak to them
with respect (23) And lower to them the wing of humility out
of compassion, and say: My Lord, have mercy on them, as
they cared for me when I was small (24)**

[Surah al-Isra' 17:23-24]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Having forbidden the ascription of partners to Him, Allah
enjoins affirmation of His oneness.

{Your Lord has ordained} as a religious instruction

{that you should worship none} of the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth, living or dead

{but Him}, for He is the One, the Eternal, Whom all creatures need, Who possesses all attributes of perfection and the greatest manifestation of those attributes, in such a manner that none of those whom He created resembles Him. He is the Bestower of blessings, both visible and hidden, Who wards off all calamities; the Creator, the Provider, the controller of all matters. He is the only One Who does all of that, and no other has any share of that.

After mentioning His rights, Allah speaks of fulfilling the rights of parents:

{and show kindness to parents} that is, be kind to them in all ways, in word and deed, because they are the reason for one's existence, and they have so much love for their child, show him kindness and are close to him, which confirms the rights of the parent over the child and the obligation of the child to show kindness to them.

{If one or both of them reach old age in your care} that is, if they reach this age, at which they become physically weak and need kind and gentle treatment, as is well known,

{do not say to them even the mildest word of annoyance}
- this is the least offence, but it is a warning against saying anything that could be more offensive than that. What is meant is: do not offend them in the slightest manner.

{or reproach them} that is, rebuke them or speak harshly to them,

{rather speak to them with respect} in ways that they like, politely and gently, with soft words that will bring joy to their hearts and reassure them. That varies from one situation and time to another, according to people's traditions.

{And lower to them the wing of humility out of compassion} that is, be humble towards them, out of compassion and seeking reward from Allah, not because you fear them or hope to get what they have, and other reasons that may deprive one of reward (from Allah).

{and say: My Lord, have mercy on them} that is, pray for mercy for them in life and in death, as recompense for their having taken care of you when you were small. From this it is understood that the longer they take care of you, the more rights they have over you. Similarly, if someone other than the parents take care of a person with regard to his religious and worldly interests, and shows him the right path in a sound manner, that person is indebted to the one who took care of him.

(65) Do not approach fornication or adultery

قال الله تعالى

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزَّيْنَىٰ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا

[الإسراء : ٣٢]

Do not approach fornication [or adultery], for it is shameful, an abominable way indeed.

[Surah al-Isra' 17:32]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

The prohibition on approaching the matter is more eloquent than the prohibition on simply doing it, because this includes the prohibition of all precursors that lead to it, for: **«...whoever lets his flocks graze around the protected area will soon find his flocks transgressing upon it.»** (Bukhari and Muslim)

That is especially applicable with regard to this matter, as many people have the strongest inclination towards it.

Allah describes fornication (or adultery), because of its abhorrent nature, as **{shameful}** that is, a sin which is regarded as shameful and evil according to Islamic teachings, reason and human nature, because it involves transgression of the sacred limits set by Allah, and it is also a transgression against the woman and against her family or husband, it causes trouble in

marriages, mixes lineages, and leads to other negative consequences.

{an abominable way indeed} that is, an evil way, the way of one who has the audacity to commit that grave sin.

**(66) We send down in the Qur'an that which is a healing
and mercy for the believers**

قال الله تعالى

وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ
إِلَّا خَسَارًا

[الإسراء : ٨٢]

**We send down in the Qur'an that which is a healing and mercy
for the believers, but it increases the wrongdoers in nothing
but loss.**

[Surah al-Isra' 17:82]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

The Qur'an contains healing and mercy, but that is not for everyone; rather it is only for those who believe in it and have knowledge of it.

As for the wrongdoers who do not believe in it, or who do not act in accordance with it, its verses only increase them in loss, as proof is established against them by means of it.

The healing that is contained in the Qur'an is broad in scope, and offers healing for spiritual maladies such as doubt, ignorance, corrupt views, deviation and bad intentions. It also contains certain knowledge by means of which all doubts may be

dispelled, and exhortation and reminders that dispel all desires that are contrary to the command of Allah. It also offers healing from physical pain and sickness.

With regard to mercy, this refers to what the Qur'an contains of the means of attaining mercy and encouragement to pursue those means; when a person does those things, he will attain mercy, eternal happiness and reward in this world and the hereafter.

(67) Benefits from the story of Moosa and al-Khidr

قال الله تعالى

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِفَتْنِهِ لَا أْبْرُحُ حَتَّى أَبْلُغَ مَجْمَعَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ أَوْ أَمْضِيَ حُقُبًا (٦٠)﴾ إلى قوله : ﴿وَأَمَّا الْجِدَارُ فَكَانَ لِغُلَامَيْنِ يَتِيمَيْنِ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ وَكَانَ تَحْتَهُ كَنْزٌ لَهُمَا وَكَانَ أَبُوهُمَا صَالِحًا فَأَرَادَ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يَبْلُغَا أَشُدَّهُمَا وَيَسْتَخْرِجَا كَنْزَهُمَا رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ وَمَا فَعَلْتُهُ عَنْ أَمْرِي ذَلِكَ تَأْوِيلُ مَا لَمْ تَسْطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا (٨٢)﴾

[الكهف : ٦٠-٨٢]

{And [remember] when Moosa said to his servant: I will not give up until I reach the junction of the two seas, even if it takes me years [of travel] (60)} to {As for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the town, and there was beneath it a treasure belonging to them. Their father had been a righteous man, so your Lord willed that they should come of age and then extract their treasure - as a mercy from your Lord; I did not do it of my own accord. This is the significance of that which you were unable to bear with patience (82)}

[Surah al-Kahf 18:60-82]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

From this amazing story we learn a number of lessons, rulings and principles, some of which we will note here:

- The virtue of knowledge and travelling to seek it. This is the most important thing, for Moosa travelled a great distance and went through hardship to seek it. He gave up his stay with the Children of Israel, whom he was teaching and guiding, and chose to travel in order to increase his knowledge.
- One should prioritize starting with the most important matters, for increasing knowledge - for an individual - is more important than neglecting that and being preoccupied with teaching others, without increasing one's own knowledge. But combining the two matters is better.
- It is permissible to hire a servant whether one is at home or travelling, so that the servant may take care of one's needs and one may have time to rest and relax, as Moosa did.
- With regard to the one who travels in pursuit of knowledge or for the purpose of *jihad* and the like, if there is a purpose to be served by telling about his aim and destination, telling about it is more appropriate than concealing it, because disclosing it brings benefits such as making full preparation for the journey, engaging in matters with proper understanding of what is involved, and manifesting the virtue of this great act of worship, as Moosa said: **{I will not give up until I reach the junction of the two seas, even if it takes me years [of travel]} (18: 60)**. Similarly,

the Prophet ﷺ informed his Companions when he went on the campaign to *Tabook* - where he was headed, even though his usual habit was to conceal his campaign plans. This is a matter that is to be done as dictated by interests.

- Evil and its causes may be ascribed to the *Shaytan*, because of his temptation and making evil fair-seeming, although all things happen by the will and decree of Allah, because the servant of Moosa said: **{it was none but the Shaytan who caused me to forget} (18: 63).**

- It is permissible for a person to express what he feels as a result of human nature, such as exhaustion, hunger or thirst, so long as that is not by way of discontent, if it is true, because Moosa said: **{truly this journey of ours has exhausted us} (18: 62).**

- It is recommended for a person's servant to be smart, alert and versatile, so that he may help him to achieve what he wants to do.

- It is recommended for a person to feed his servant the food that he himself eats, and for them to eat together, because the apparent meaning of Moosa's words, **{Bring us our morning meal} (18: 62)**, refers to both of them and suggests that they would eat together.

- Divine help may be granted to a person commensurate with the extent to which he is doing what is enjoined upon him, and the one who is doing something in accordance with the command of Allah will receive help in a way that others do not, because of the

words: **{truly this journey of ours has exhausted us} (18: 62)**. This refers to the journey beyond the junction of the two seas. Before that, he did not complain of exhaustion, even though he had travelled a long way, because that was travel in a true sense. As for the subsequent travel, what appears to be the case is that it was part of a day, because they lost the fish when they got to the rock. It seems that they spent the night at the rock, then they set off the next day, until the time for the morning meal came, when Moosa said to his servant: **{Bring us our morning meal} (18: 62)**. At that point he remembered that he had forgotten the fish in the place that was the destination they had been seeking.

- The person whom they met was not a Prophet; rather he was a righteous slave of Allah, because he is described as being a true slave of Allah. Moreover, he mentioned what Allah had blessed him with of mercy and knowledge, but no mention is made of being a Messenger or Prophet. If he had been a Prophet, that would have been mentioned as it was mentioned in the case of others.

With regard to his words at the end of the story, **{I did not do it of my own accord} (18: 82)**, this does not indicate that he was a Prophet; rather it indicates that he was inspired, as may happen in the case of people other than Prophets, as Allah says elsewhere: **{We inspired the mother of Moosa, saying: Breastfeed him...} (al-Qasas 28: 7)** and: **{And your Lord inspired the bee [saying]: Make your homes in the mountains...} (an-Nahl 16: 68)**

The knowledge that Allah teaches to His slaves is of **two** types: **(1)** knowledge acquired through effort and striving, and **(2)** knowledge received directly from Allah, without effort, which Allah bestows upon whomever He will of His slaves, because He says: **{to whom We had taught knowledge of Our own} (18: 65).**

- One should show proper etiquette towards teachers, and the seeker of knowledge should address his teacher in a gentle manner, because Moosa said: **{May I follow you so that you may teach me something of that sound knowledge that you have been taught} (18: 66).** He spoke to him in a polite and gentle manner, asking permission, as if he was saying: Will you give me permission to do that or not? And he affirmed that he would learn from him. This is in contrast to those who address their teachers in a rough or arrogant manner, not highlighting their need of the teachers' knowledge; rather they claim to be working together with them. Indeed, some may think that they are teaching the teachers, when in fact they are extremely ignorant. Showing humility towards the teacher and expressing one's need of his teaching is one of the most beneficial approaches for the student.

- One who is superior may show humility to learn from one who is of lower status than him. Moosa was undoubtedly of higher status than al-Khidr.

- A knowledgeable and virtuous person may learn a branch of knowledge that he does not know from one who does possess

that knowledge, even if he is many degrees lower than him in terms of overall knowledge. Moosa was one of the Messengers of strong resolve to whom Allah had granted knowledge that He did not grant to others, but with regard to this particular branch of knowledge, al-Khidr possessed knowledge that Moosa did not; therefore, he was very keen to learn from him. Based on that, if a scholar of *hadith* or *fiqh* is lacking in knowledge of grammar or morphology or some other branch of knowledge, he should not refrain from learning it from one who is skilled therein, even if he is not a scholar of *hadith* or *fiqh*.

- One should attribute knowledge and other virtues to Allah, and affirm them, and give thanks to Allah for them, because Moosa said: **{so that you may teach me something of that sound knowledge that you have been taught} (18: 66)**, that is, that knowledge which Allah has taught you.

- Beneficial knowledge is that which guides to good. Any knowledge in which there is guidance to the ways of goodness and warning against the ways of evil, or is a means of achieving that, is regarded as beneficial knowledge. All other knowledge is either harmful or of no benefit, because Moosa said: **{so that you may teach me something of that sound knowledge that you have been taught} (18: 66)**.

- Whoever does not have the patience to accompany a scholar and learn from him, and is not able to be steadfast in that, will miss out, according to the degree of his lack of patience, on a

great deal of knowledge. Whoever has no patience will not acquire any knowledge, but the one who resorts to patience and adheres to it will attain all that he strives for, because al-Khidr said - when he explained to Moosa why he could not learn from him that he would never be able to have patience with him (18: 67).

- The primary means of attaining patience is having full knowledge and understanding of the matter with which he is instructed to be patient. Otherwise if he is not aware of it or does not realize its purpose and consequences, or its benefit and outcome, he will have no reason to be patient, because al-Khidr said: **{for how can you have patience with something that you cannot fully comprehend} (18: 68)**. So he stated that the reason for his lack of patience was his lack of understanding of the matter.

- It is enjoined to be deliberate and certain, and not to be hasty in passing judgement concerning any matter until one knows what is the aim behind it and the goal that is sought.

- One should connect matters of the future - that have to do with what a person wants to do - to the divine will, and no one should say about anything, "I am going to do that in the future" without also saying "if Allah wills"

- Resolving to do a thing is not the same as doing it, because Moosa said: **{You shall find me, if Allah wills, patient} (18: 69)**. He prepared himself to be patient, but he did not do it.

- If the teacher sees that there is an interest to be served by instructing the student not to ask questions about some things until the teacher is the one who explains them to him, then there should be a reason for it such as the student not being able to understand it yet, or because he told the student not to ask about minor details when enquiring about matters because other questions may be more important, or because the student is not able to comprehend it, or because he is asking a question that has nothing to do with the topic under discussion.
- It is permissible to travel by sea, so long as there is no fear of drowning.
- The one who forgets is not called to account for his forgetfulness, whether with regard to the rights of Allah or the rights of people, because Moosa said: **{Do not take me to task for what I have forgotten} (18: 73).**
- We should accept people as they are with regard to their attitude and behavior, and accept what they are happy to give when dealing with them. We should not burden them with more than they can cope with, or put undue pressure on them, because that will put them off and make them feel fed up with us. Rather we should accept them as they are, so that dealing with them will be easy.
- People should be judged as they appear to be, and rulings on material matters, such as wealth, life and so on, should be based on what appears to be the case. Moosa denounced al-Khidr for

scuttling the boat and killing the boy because these things appeared to be wrong, so Moosa should not have kept quiet about them, except in this case when he was accompanying al-Khidr. So he hastened to issue his ruling based on what is usually the case, and he did not pay attention to this extraordinary situation that required him to be patient and not be hasty in denouncing.

- The important and sublime ruling is that the greater evil may be warded off by a lesser evil, and a greater interest may be served by foregoing a lesser interest. Killing the boy was bad, but letting him live until he caused his parents to recant their religion was a greater evil. Letting the boy live and not killing him, and protecting his life, may have been regarded as something good, but what was better was to protect the religious commitment and faith of his parents. Therefore, al-Khidr killed him. Many guidelines and benefits come under the heading of this general ruling, so when there are conflicting matters, they all come under this ruling.

- Another important principle with regard to one man handling the wealth of another is that if it is done in a manner that serves the latter's interests and wards off harm, it is permissible for him to do that, even without permission and even if that involves causing some damage to the property of the other person, such as when al-Khidr scuttled the boat in order to render it defective, so that it would be safe from being seized unlawfully by the unjust king. Based on that, if a fire or flood or the like occurs in

the house or property of a man, then it is permissible to damage part of the property or demolish part of the house for the sake of saving the rest. In fact, that is prescribed, so as to protect the wealth and property of the other person. Similarly, if a wrongdoer wants to take the property of that other person, so one gives him some of the wealth in order to ransom the rest, that is permissible, even without permission.

- It is permissible to make a living on the sea just as it is permissible on land, because al-Khidr said: **{who made their living on the sea} (18: 79)** and Allah did not denounce what they did.

- A poor person may have wealth that is not sufficient to meet his needs, and that does not cancel out the description of him as poor, because Allah tells us that these poor people had a boat.

- Killing is one of the worst of sins, because Moosa said with regard to the killing of the boy: **{You have done a terrible thing} (18: 74).**

- Killing in legal retribution (*qisaas*) is not an evil deed, because he said: **{Have you killed an innocent soul who killed no one?} (18: 74).**

- Allah will protect the righteous person himself and will protect his offspring.

- Serving righteous people and anyone who is connected to them is better than serving others, because al-Khidr explained the

reason why he extracted the treasure of the two boys and rebuilt their wall as being that the father had been a righteous man.

- One should use proper etiquette with Allah by choosing the proper words. Al-Khidr attributed the act of damaging the boat to himself, when he said: **{I wanted to damage it} (18: 79).**

But in the case of good, he attributed it to Allah, because he said: **{so your Lord willed that they should come of age and then extract their treasure - as a mercy from your Lord} (18: 82).**

This is like when Ibraheem said:

{When I am sick He heals me} (ash-Shu'ara 26: 80)

and when the *jinn* said:

{We do not know whether ill is intended for those on earth, or their Lord intends good for them} (al-Jinn 72: 10)

even though everything happens by the will and decree of Allah.

- A person should not leave his companion under any circumstances unless he has made clear to him what he should not do, warns him against doing so and explains what he did wrong, as al-Khidr did with Moosa.

- Going along with one's companions with regard to things that are not prohibited is a means of companionship lasting and becoming stronger, just as lack of such harmony leads to the end of companionship.

- These things that al-Khidr did were the result of the pure divine decree that Allah caused to occur at the hands of this righteous slave, so that by means of this story people may come to understand the subtlety of the divine decree, and that Allah may decree things that a person dislikes very much but they are good for his religious commitment, as in the case of the boy, or they are good for his worldly interests, as in the case of the boat. Thus He shows examples of His kindness and generosity, so that people may understand and be fully content with the divine decree that may hurt.

(68) Say O Muhammad: I am but a human being like yourselves

قال الله تعالى

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ ۚ أَحَدًا

[الكهف : ١١٠]

Say [O Muhammad]: I am but a human being like yourselves, [except that] it has been revealed to me that your God is One God. So whoever hopes to meet his Lord, let him do righteous deeds and include no one else in the worship due to his Lord.

[Surah al-Kahf 18:110]

◆ **Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:**

{Say} O Muhammad ﷺ, to the disbelievers and others

{I am but a human being like yourselves} that is, I am not divine and I have no share in dominion, or any knowledge of the unseen, nor do I possess the treasures of Allah (11: 31).

{I am but a human being like yourselves}, one of the slaves of my Lord

{[except that] it has been revealed to me that your God is One God} that is, I have been favored over you by means of the

revelation that Allah has bestowed upon me, the main message of which is to tell you that your God is One God, with no partner or associate, and no one deserves an atom's worth of worship but He. And I call you to do deeds that will bring you closer to Him, earn you His reward and ward off His punishment from you. Hence Allah says:

{So whoever hopes to meet his Lord, let him do righteous deeds} that are in accordance with the laws of Allah, both obligatory and recommended deeds.

{and include no one else in the worship due to his Lord} that is, he should not show off in his deeds; rather he should do deeds sincerely for the sake of Allah. This refers to one who combines sincerity with following Islamic teachings; he is the one who will attain that which he hopes for and seeks. As for others, they will be losers in this world and the hereafter, and they will miss out on drawing close to their Lord and attaining His pleasure.

(69) ‘Eesa said: Verily I am a slave of Allah.

قال الله تعالى

قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ ءَاتَنِي الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا (٣٠) وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا (٣١) وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَتِي وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْنِي جَبَّارًا شَقِيًّا (٣٢) وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا (٣٣)

[مريم : ٣٠-٣٣]

‘Eesa said: Verily I am a slave of Allah; He has given me the Book and made me a Prophet (30 He has made me blessed wherever I may be, and has enjoined on me prayer and zakah as long as I live (31) And He has made me dutiful towards my mother, and not arrogant or unblessed (32) So peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I die and the day I will be raised up to life again (33)

[Surah Maryam 19:30-33]

◆ **Imam as-Sa’di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:**

‘Eesa said, when he was an infant in the cradle:

{Verily I am a slave of Allah; He has given me the Book and made me a Prophet}. He addressed them, referring to himself as a slave of Allah and stating that he possessed no attributes for

which he might deserve to be taken as a god or as the son of God; exalted be Allah far above what the Christians, who claim to be followers of 'Eesa but drifted away from his path, say concerning him, which is contrary to what 'Eesa himself said: **{Verily I am a slave of Allah}**.

{He has given me the Book} that is, He has decreed that He will give me the Book

{and made me a Prophet}. Thus he informed them that he was a slave of Allah, and that Allah had taught him the Book and made him one of His Prophets. These are attributes of perfection that had to do with 'Eesa himself.

Then he mentioned other attributes of perfection that made him beneficial for others, as he said:

{He has made me blessed wherever I may be} that is, in any place and at any time. The blessing that Allah bestowed upon him had to do with teaching good and calling people to it, forbidding evil, and calling people to Allah in word and deed. Anyone who sat with him or met him would attain his blessing, and anyone who accompanied him would feel happy.

{and has enjoined on me prayer and zakah as long as I live} that is, He has enjoined me to fulfil His rights, the most important of which is prayer, and the rights of His slaves, the most important of which is *zakah*, for as long as I live, and I am complying with the instructions of my Lord, acting in accordance with them, and putting them into practice.

{And He has made me dutiful towards my mother} that is, He has also enjoined me to honor my mother, treat her with the utmost kindness, and do what I should for her, because of her honor and virtue, and because she is a mother and has rights because she gave birth to me and cared for me thereafter.

{and not arrogant} towards Allah or looking down on His slaves **{or unblessed}** in this world or the hereafter. He has not made me like that; rather He has made me obedient and humble towards Him and humble towards the slaves of Allah, blessed in this world and the hereafter, I and those who follow me.

As he attained all perfection and good qualities, he said: **{So peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I die and the day I will be raised up to life again}** that is, by the great kindness and grace of my Lord, I have attained peace and safety on the day of my birth, the day of my death, and the day I will be resurrected, from evil, the *Shaytan* and punishment. This implies that he will be safe from the terrors of the Day of Resurrection and the abode of the evil (hell), and that he will be one of the people of the abode of peace (paradise). This is a great miracle and amazing proof that he is a Messenger of Allah and a true slave of Allah.

(70) O my Lord, increase me in knowledge.

قال الله تعالى

**فَتَعَالَى اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ وَلَا تَعْجَلْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يُقْضَىٰ إِلَيْكَ
وَحْيُهُ ۚ وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا**

[طه : ١١٤]

So exalted be Allah, the True Sovereign. Do not hasten to repeat [the newly-revealed verses of] the Qur'an before its revelation to you is completed, and say: O my Lord, increase me in knowledge.

[Surah Taha 20:114]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Because the Prophet's ﷺ hastening to repeat the Revelation was indicative of his perfect love for knowledge and his eagerness to acquire it, Allah instructed him to ask Him for more knowledge, for knowledge is good and to have a great deal of goodness is something that is required. It is from Allah, and the way to attain it is by striving, longing for knowledge, asking Allah for it, seeking His help and acknowledging one's need for Him at all times.

From this verse we learn the etiquette of receiving knowledge, and that the one who listens to knowledge must be

patient and wait until the teacher has finished speaking, because what he wants to say is interconnected. Then when he has finished, the one who has questions may ask him. He should not hasten to ask questions and interrupt the teacher when he is speaking, because that is a cause of being deprived of knowledge. At the same time, the one who is asked a question should try to understand what the questioner is asking and find out what he really wants to know before answering, because that will help him to give the right answer.

(71) Whoever turns away from My Reminder will have a miserable life

قال الله تعالى

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ
الْقِيَمَةِ أَعْمَى

[طه : ١٢٤]

But whoever turns away from My Reminder (the Qur'an) will have a miserable life, and on the Day of Resurrection We will raise him blind.

[Surah Taha 20:124]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{But whoever turns away from My Reminder} that is, My Book by means of which he will be reminded of all sublime aims and goals; whoever turns away from it due to lack of interest in it or - what is worse - turns away from it because he rejects it and does not believe in it **{will have a miserable life}** that is, his requital will be that We will make his life difficult and hard; this cannot mean anything other than a life of pain and suffering.

(72) Allah will defend those who believe

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُدَافِعُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ خَوَّانٍ كَفُورٍ

[الحج : ٣٨]

Verily, Allah will defend those who believe; verily Allah does not love the treacherous and the ungrateful.

[Surah al-Hajj 22:38]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This is a promise and glad tidings from Allah to those who believe, that Allah will ward off from them all hardships and will ward off from them all evil - because of their faith - and He will protect them from the evil of the disbelievers, the evil of the whispers of the *Shaytan*, the evil of their own selves and their bad deeds. He will help them when hardship comes and they are faced with something beyond that which they can bear, and He will reduce it greatly. Every believer has a share of this defense and the virtue of being defended, commensurate with his faith; some will have a little and some will have a great deal.

**(73) O you who believe, bow and prostrate, and
worship your Lord.**

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَاعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ وَافْعَلُوا الْخَيْرَ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

[الحج : ٧٧]

**O you who believe, bow and prostrate, and worship your
Lord, and do good, so that you may prosper.**

[Surah al-Hajj 22:77]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah enjoins His believing slaves to pray, and mentions in particular bowing and prostration, because of the virtue of these deeds and because they are an essential part of the prayer and of worshipping Him which brings comfort and consolation to one who is grieved. His Lordship and generosity towards His slaves require them to devote their worship to Him alone and make it incumbent upon them to do good deeds in general.

Allah has made prosperity and success dependent upon these things, as He says: **{so that you may prosper}** that is, so that you may attain what you seek and be saved from what you

fear. There is no way to prosper and succeed except by being sincere in worship of the Creator alone and striving to be of benefit to His slaves. Whoever is enabled to do that will attain a high level of happiness, success and prosperity.

**(74) Those who will inherit al-Firdous and abide therein
forever**

قال الله تعالى

**قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ (١) الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ (٢) وَالَّذِينَ
هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ (٣) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ (٤) وَالَّذِينَ
هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ (٥) إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ
فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ (٦) فَمَنْ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ (٧)
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ (٨) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَوَاتِهِمْ
يَحَافِظُونَ (٩) أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ (١٠) الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ
فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (١١)**

[المؤمنون : ١-١١]

The believers have indeed attained true success (1) Those who humble themselves in their prayers (2) who turn away from all that is vain (3) who are active in giving zakah (4) and who restrain their carnal desires (5) except with their wives or any slave women they may own, for then they are free of blame (6) But whoever seeks anything beyond that, such are the transgressors (7) Those who are faithful to their trusts and pledges (8) and who are diligent in their prayers (9) such will

be the heirs (10) who will inherit paradise; they will abide therein forever (11)

[Surah al-Mu'minoon: 23:1-11]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah praises and commends His believing slaves, highlighting their success and bliss, and the means by which they attain that. This implicitly urges us to acquire the same characteristics and encourages us to do so. So the individual should take stock of himself and others, measuring against these standards; thus he will know what he and others have of faith, and the level and extent of that faith.

{The believers have indeed attained true success} that is, they are victorious, blessed and successful, for they have attained everything that one may seek. Among the perfect attributes of the believers who believe in Allah and in the Messengers is the fact that they **{humble themselves in their prayers}**.

Humble focus in prayer means presence of mind before Allah, bearing in mind how close He is. Thus the believer's heart is comforted, his mind is put at rest, his movements become still and he is not distracted, as he stands humbly before his Lord, focusing on everything that he says and does in his prayer, from beginning to end. Thus he dispels devilish whispers and bad thoughts. This is the essence and purpose of prayer, and this is what will be written down in the individual's record.

With regard to prayer in which there is no humility and focus of mind, even though it may be valid and rewardable, the reward for it will be commensurate with the person's level of focus and understanding of what he says.

{who turn away from all that is vain}, which is words in which there is nothing good and no benefit. They turn away from it out of dislike for it, and so as to protect themselves and rise above it; if they pass by (people engaged in) idle talk, they pass by with dignity (25: 72). As they turn away from all that is vain, it is even more apt that they should turn away from that which is prohibited.

If a person can rein in his tongue and keep it under control - speaking only of that which is good - then he will be in control of all his affairs, as the Prophet ﷺ said to Mu'adh ibn Jabal (*radiya Allahu anhu* - may Allah be pleased with him) when he gave him advice:

«The Prophet ﷺ said: Shall I not tell you of the basis of all of that? I said: Yes, O Messenger of Allah. He took hold of his own tongue and said: Restrain this.» (Ibn Majah)

One of the praiseworthy characteristics of the believers is that they restrain their tongues and refrain from vain talk and saying that which is prohibited.

{who are active in giving zakah} that is, they give *zakah* on their wealth of all types, thus purifying themselves by giving up bad attitudes and bad deeds. So they do well in worshipping the

Creator and in focusing humbly in their prayer, and they do good to His creation by giving *zakah*.

{and who restrain their carnal desires} and refrain from *zina* (unlawful sexual relationships). Part of restraining their carnal desires is avoiding anything that leads to that which is unlawful, such as looking, touching and so on. So they restrain their carnal desires and refrain from illicit relationships with anyone except **{their wives or any slave women they may own, for then they are free of blame}** if they have intimate relations with them, because Allah has permitted that.

{But whoever seeks anything beyond that} that is, beyond the wife or the female slave

{such are the transgressors} who have gone beyond what Allah has permitted to that which He has prohibited, and have the audacity to transgress the limits set by Allah.

The general meaning of this verse indicates that *Mut'ah* marriage (temporary marriage) is prohibited, and the woman in such a marriage is not a wife in a true sense, with the intention of permanent marriage, nor is she a slave. *Tahleel* marriage is prohibited for the same reason.

The words **{or any slave women they may own}** indicate that in order for it to be permissible to have intimate relations with a slave woman, it is stipulated that one should own her entirely. If a man has a part-share in ownership of a slave woman, it is not permissible to have intimate relations with her,

because he does not fully own her; rather she belongs to him and to someone else. Just as it is not permissible for two husbands to share a free woman, it is not permissible for two masters to share a slave woman.

{Those who are faithful to their trusts and pledges} that is, they are faithful to them, knowing the terms thereof and adhering to them, and they are keen to fulfil the conditions and implement what they promised. This is general in meaning and applies to all trusts that have to do with the rights of Allah and those that have to do with the rights of people. Allah says:

{Verily, We offered the Trust to the heavens, the earth, and the mountains, yet they refused to undertake it and were afraid of it. But man undertook it...} (al-Ahzab 33: 72)

Everything that Allah has enjoined upon His slave is a trust, and the slave must adhere to it by complying with it fully. This also includes things that are entrusted to people, such as property or wealth, secrets and so on. The individual must pay attention to both and must fulfil both types of trusts.

{Verily, Allah commands you to render back trusts to those to whom they are due...} (an-Nisa 4: 58)

The same applies to pledges, including pledges between people and their Lord, and pledges that people make amongst themselves. They must be faithful to them and fulfil them, and it is forbidden to be heedless and negligent with regard to them.

{and who are diligent in their prayers} that is, they persist in offering them on time, in the prescribed manner, fulfilling their conditions and doing all the essential parts thereof. Allah praises them for their humble focus and diligence in prayer, because they cannot be in good shape unless they do both. Whoever persists in praying without humbling themselves, or humbles himself without being diligent in prayer, is falling short.

{such} that is, those who are described in these terms

{will be the heirs who will inherit paradise}. The word translated here as **{paradise}** (*firdous*) refers to the highest part of paradise, the middle and best of it, because they attained the best of praiseworthy attributes. Or it may be that what is meant is all of paradise, so that this includes all the believers of varying levels, each according to his situation.

{they will abide therein forever} and will never leave it, nor will they want to move from it, because it contains the most perfect, best and most complete delights, without anything to spoil their joy or undermine their happiness.

(75) They are the ones who hasten to do good deeds

قال الله تعالى

**إِنَّ الَّذِينَ هُمْ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ رَبِّهِمْ مُشْفِقُونَ (٥٧) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِآيَاتِ
رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ (٥٨) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِرَبِّهِمْ لَا يُشْرِكُونَ (٥٩) وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ
مَاءً آتَوْا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ (٦٠) أُولَئِكَ يُسْرِعُونَ
فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَهُمْ لَهَا سَابِقُونَ (٦١) وَلَا نَكُلِفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا وَلَدِينَا
كِتَابٌ يَنْطِقُ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ (٦٢)**

[المؤمنون : ٥٧-٦٢]

**Verily those who are filled with reverent awe of their Lord
(57) And who believe in the revelations of their Lord (58) And
who do not ascribe partners to their Lord (59) And who give
what they give [of charity], their hearts filled with
apprehension, knowing that they will return to their Lord (60)
Those are the ones who hasten to do good deeds, and they
are foremost in attaining them (61) We do not place on any
soul a burden greater than it can bear. We have a record [of
their deeds] that speaks the truth, and they will not be
wronged (62)**

[Surah al-Mu'minoon: 23:57-62]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{And who give what they give [of charity]} that is, they give of themselves what they are instructed to give, giving whatever they are able to of prayer, *zakah*, *hajj*, charity and so on. But at the same time, **{their hearts [are] filled with apprehension}** that is, they fear that when their deeds are presented to Him and they stand before Him, they will not save them from the punishment of Allah, because they know their Lord and are aware of what He deserves of all kinds of worship.

{Those are the ones who hasten to do good deeds} that is, in the arena of competing to do good deeds, their main concern is that which will bring them closer to Allah, and they are focused on that which could save them from His punishment. Whatever good deed they hear of or have the opportunity to do, they hasten to make the most of it and do that good deed. They look at the close friends and chosen ones of Allah who are ahead of them and on their right and left, hastening to do all that is good and striving to draw close to their Lord, and they try to compete with them. As the one who is racing and competing with others may go ahead because of his efforts and striving, or he may not do so because of his shortcomings, Allah tells us that these people are among the category who will be foremost, as He says: **{and they are foremost in attaining them}** that is, good deeds. They will attain the pinnacle, for they competed with the first rank. Moreover, it was already decreed by Allah that they would be among those who are blessed and those who are foremost.

(76) The slanderous lie against the Mother of the Believers: 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her)

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا بِالْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ مِّنْكُمْ لَا تَحْسَبُوهُ شَرًّا لَّكُمْ بَلْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ مَا أَكْتَسَبَ مِنَ الْإِثْمِ وَالَّذِي تَوَلَّى كِبْرَهُ مِنْهُمْ لَهُ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ (١١) لَّوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بِأَنفُسِهِمْ خَيْرًا وَقَالُوا هَذَا إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ (١٢) لَّوْلَا جَاءُوا عَلَيْهِ بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَإِذْ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِالشُّهَدَاءِ فَقُولْ لِّكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُمْ الْكَاذِبُونَ (١٣) وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ لَمَسَّكُمْ فِي مَا أَفَضْتُمْ فِيهِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ (١٤) إِذْ تَلَقَّوْنَهُ بِالسِّنِّتِمْ وَتَقُولُونَ بَافْوَاهِكُمْ مَا لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَتَحْسَبُونَهُ هَيِّنًا وَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ (١٥) وَلَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ قُلْتُمْ مَا يَكُونُ لَنَا أَنْ نَتَكَلَّمَ بِهَذَا سُبْحَانَكَ هَذَا بُهْتَنٌ عَظِيمٌ (١٦) يَعِظُكُمُ اللَّهُ أَنْ تَعُودُوا لِمِثْلِهِ أَبَدًا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ (١٧) وَيُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ (١٨) إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ تَشِيعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ (١٩) وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ رءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ (٢٠) ❀ يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوتِ الشَّيْطَانِ وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعْ خُطُوتِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَإِنَّهُ يَأْمُرُ

بِالْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ مَا زَكَّى مِنْكُمْ مِّنْ
 أَحَدٍ أَبَدًا وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُزَكِّي مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ (٢١) وَلَا يَأْتَلِ
 أُولُوا الْفَضْلِ مِنْكُمْ وَالسَّعَةِ أَن يُؤْتُوا أُولَى الْقُرْبَى وَالْمَسْكِينِ
 وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَن يَغْفِرَ
 اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ (٢٢) إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَزُمُونَ الْمَحْصَنَاتِ
 الْغَفْلَتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ لِعُنُوا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ (٢٣)
 يَوْمَ تَشْهَدُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَلْسِنَتُهُمْ وَأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (٢٤)
 يَوْمَئِذٍ يُوفِّيهِمُ اللَّهُ دِينَهُمُ الْحَقَّ وَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ الْمُبِينُ
 (٢٥) الْخَبِيثَاتُ لِلْخَبِيثِينَ وَالْخَبِيثُونَ لِلْخَبِيثَاتِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ لِلطَّيِّبِينَ
 وَالطَّيِّبُونَ لِلطَّيِّبَاتِ أُولَئِكَ مُبَرَّءُونَ مِمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ
 كَرِيمٌ (٢٦)

[النور: ١١-٢٦]

Verily those who propagated the slander were a group among
 you. Do not think that it was bad for you; rather it is good for
 you. Each man among them bears [responsibility for] his share
 in the sin, and as for the one among them who played the
 major role, for him there will be a grievous punishment (11)
 Why, when you heard it, did the believing men and women
 not think the best of one another and say: This is obviously a
 lie? (12) Why did they not bring four witnesses to prove it? As

they did not bring the witnesses, they are the liars before Allah (13) Were it not for the grace and mercy of Allah towards you in this world and the hereafter, a grievous penalty would have overtaken you, because of the talk you indulged in (14) When you were propagating it with your tongues and saying with your mouths that of which you had no knowledge. You regarded [your talking about it] as a trivial matter, whereas with Allah it was a grievous offence (15) Why, when you heard it, did you not say: It is not right for us to speak of this. Glory be to You [O Allah]! This is a monstrous slander! (16) Allah admonishes you never to repeat such conduct, if you are [truly] believers (17) And Allah explains the revelations to you, for Allah is All-Knowing, Most Wise (18) Verily those who like to see indecency spread among the believers will have a painful punishment in this world and the hereafter; Allah knows, and you do not know (19) Were it not for the grace and mercy of Allah towards you, and that He is Most Compassionate, Most Merciful, [He would have hastened to punish you] (20) O you who believe, do not follow the footsteps of the Shaytan: whoever follows the footsteps of the Shaytan, he only enjoins indecency and wickedness. Were it not for the grace and mercy of Allah towards you, not one of you would ever have been purified. But Allah purifies whomever He wills, and Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing (21) Let not those among you who are people of virtue and wealth swear to cease giving [aid] to their kinsfolk, the needy and

those who have migrated in Allah's cause. Rather let them pardon and overlook. Do you not like for Allah to forgive you? For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful (22) Verily those who make accusations against chaste women who are innocent at heart and believers are cursed in this world and the hereafter, and theirs will be a grievous punishment (23) On the day when their own tongues, hands and feet will testify against them regarding what they used to do (24) On that day, Allah will give them in full their due recompense and they will know that Allah is indeed the Truth Who makes manifest [the true nature of all things] (25) Evil men are for evil women and evil women are for evil men; good words describe good people, and good people are described by good words. Those [good people] are innocent of all that [the slanderers] say; they will have forgiveness and a generous provision (26)

[Surah an-Nur 24:11-26]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

In the previous verses (in the beginning of the *soorah*), Allah mentioned the seriousness of false accusations of adultery in general terms; it is as if that was an introduction to this story, which happened to the noblest of women, the Mother of the Believers 'Aishah (*radiya Allahu 'anha* - may Allah be pleased with her). These verses were revealed concerning the well-known story of the slander (*al-ifk*) which is proven in the books of *Saheeh*, the *Sunans* and the *Musnads* (books of *Hadith*).

In brief, the Prophet ﷺ went out on one of his military campaigns, and took his wife, 'Aishah as-Siddeeqah bint (Abi Bakr) as-Siddeeq (*radiya Allahu 'anhuma* - may Allah be pleased with both of them) with him. Her necklace broke, so she stayed behind to look for it, and they moved on with her camel and howdah, not realizing that she was not there. The army moved on, and she came back to the place where they had been camping; she knew that once they realized that she was missing, they would come back for her, but they continued on their way.

In the meantime, Safwan ibn al-Mu'attal as-Sulami, who was one of the best of the *Sahabah*, had lagged behind the army, and had stopped at the end of the night to sleep. He now came along and he saw 'Aishah and recognized her, so he made his camel kneel down and she mounted it, without him speaking to her or her speaking to him. Then he came, leading the camel, after the army had halted at noon time. When some of the hypocrites who were accompanying the Prophet ﷺ on that journey saw Safwan arriving with her in that state, they began to spread rumors, and the rumors spread far and wide, and people's tongues wagged until even some believers were deceived and began to narrate what they had heard, and the revelations stopped coming to the Messenger ﷺ for a long time.

News of what was happening reached 'Aishah sometime after that, and she was very upset by it. Then Allah sent down revelation confirming her innocence in these verses, in which He

admonished the believers, highlighted how serious the matter was, and gave some important instructions.

{Verily those who propagated the slander} that is, the abhorrent lie, which was an accusation against the Mother of the Believers **{were a group among you}** that is, they were a group who belonged to you, O believers, some of whom were sincere believers, but they were deceived by the rumors of the hypocrites, and some of them were themselves hypocrites.

{Do not think that it was bad for you; rather it is good for you} because of the outcome of the matter, namely the declaration of the innocence and chastity of the Mother of the Believers, and the mention of her in the highest terms; that praise went even further, to include all of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ; and because of what this incident led to of the revelation of some verses that people needed, which will remain applicable until the Day of Resurrection. All of this was great goodness that, were it not for the rumors spread by those who initiated the slander, would not have been achieved. If Allah wills something, He creates a cause for it. Therefore, these words are addressed in general terms to all the believers, as Allah told them that impugning one another is like impugning their own selves.

Hence the verse implies that the believers, in their mutual love, compassion, mercy and unity are like a single body, and the believers as a whole are like a structure, parts of which support other parts. Just as any individual would hate his honor to be

impugned, he should hate for anyone to impugn the honor of his fellow believer, who is like himself. Unless a person reaches this level, he is lacking in faith and in sincerity towards his brother.

{Each man among them bears [responsibility for] his share in the sin} this is a warning to those who produced this slander that they will be punished for what they said of such things. In fact, the Prophet ﷺ carried out the *hadd* punishment on some of them. **{and as for the one among them who played the major role}** namely the evil hypocrite 'Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salool (may Allah curse him) **{for him there will be a grievous punishment}** namely eternity in the lowest level of hell.

Then Allah advises His slaves as to what they should do if they hear such talk: **{Why, when you heard it, did the believing men and women not think the best of one another}** that is, the believers should think well of one another, which means assuming that they are innocent of what they are accused of, because what they have of certain faith should ward off any false accusations made against them. **{and say}** because of that positive thinking of one another **{This is obviously a lie}** that is, a fabrication, one of the most abhorrent and most obviously mendacious of things. This is the way of thinking that is required when the believer hears such things about his fellow believer; he should state his innocence verbally and tell the one who says that: You are lying.

{Why did they not bring four witnesses to prove it} That is, why did those who made this accusation not bring four witnesses of good character to testify to it?

{As they did not bring the witnesses, they are the liars before Allah}. Even if they are certain of that, according to the rulings of Allah they are liars, because Allah has forbidden them to speak of that unless they can produce four witnesses. Hence Allah says: **{As they did not bring the witnesses, they are the liars before Allah}**. All of this serves to emphasize the sanctity of the Muslim's honor, as it is not permissible to make an accusation against him without having the required number of witnesses to confirm it.

{Were it not for the grace and mercy of Allah towards you in this world and the hereafter}, as His kindness encompasses you in both realms, in both your religious and worldly affairs,

{a grievous penalty would have overtaken you, because of the talk you indulged in} with regard to the slander, because you deserve that as a result of what you said. But by Allah's grace and mercy towards you, He prescribed repentance for you and made the punishment a means of purification.

{When you were propagating it with your tongues} that is, spreading it and passing it to one another, whispering the gossip when it was a false story,

{and saying with your mouths that of which you had no knowledge}. There are **two** forbidden matters here: **(1)** speaking on the basis of falsehood and **(2)** speaking without knowledge

{You regarded [your talking about it] as a trivial matter}, therefore some of the believers did that, who later repented and purified themselves

{whereas with Allah it was a grievous offence}. This is an emphatic rebuke against indulging in some sins because one thinks that they are trivial. But what a person thinks will not avail him anything and will not reduce the punishment for that sin; rather it makes him get carried away in sin and makes it easy for him to do it again.

{Why, when you heard it} that is, why - O believers - when you heard what the people of the slander said

{did you not say}, denouncing it and regarding it as a serious matter,

{It is not right for us to speak of this} that is, we should not speak of this, and it is not appropriate for us to speak of this obvious lie, because the believer's faith prevents him from committing abhorrent deeds

{This is a monstrous slander} that is, a monstrous lie.

{Allah admonishes you never to repeat such conduct} that is, accusing the believers of immorality; Allah admonishes you and advises you not to repeat that, and what a beautiful

admonition and advice from our Lord. Therefore, we should accept it and submit to it, and give thanks to Him for what He has explained to us. **{...How excellent is the exhortation Allah gives you...} (an-Nisa' 4: 58)**

{if you are [truly] believers}. This indicates that sincere faith prevents a person from committing prohibited actions.

{And Allah explains the revelations to you} that contain the explanation of rulings, admonition, rebukes, encouragement and warnings. He explains them to you clearly,

{for Allah is All-Knowing} that is, His knowledge is perfect and His wisdom is all-encompassing, and by His knowledge and wisdom He has taught you what He taught you, and that is in your best interests at all times.

{Verily those who like to see indecency} that is, abhorrent and grievous things **{spread among the believers will have a painful punishment in this world and the hereafter}** that is, a punishment that will hurt them emotionally and physically, because of their insincerity towards their Muslim brothers and their loving bad things for them, and their audacity in impugning their honor. If this warning is for merely liking indecency to be spread, and finding it exciting, then how about that which is worse than that, of showing that and transmitting it? It is the same whether the immoral act is actually committed or not.

All of this is by the mercy of Allah towards His believing slaves, and in order to protect their honor, as He protected their

lives and wealth. Allah enjoined them to have a sincere relationship with one another, and instructed them that one of them should love for his brother what he loves for himself, and hate for his brother what he hates for himself.

{Allah knows, and you do not know} therefore He has taught you and explained to you that of which you are not aware.

{Were it not for the grace and mercy of Allah towards you} that encompass you on all sides,

{and that He is Most Compassionate, Most Merciful}, He would not have explained these rulings to you and would not have exhorted you, and He would not have given respite to those who go against His commands. But by His grace and mercy, which are His constant attributes, this matter resulted in some goodness for you in this world and in the hereafter, that is more than you can count or enumerate.

Having forbidden this sin in particular, Allah then forbids sins in general terms, as He says:

{O you who believe, do not follow the footsteps of the Shaytan} that is, his ways and whispers. The footsteps of the *Shaytan* include all the sins having to do with the heart (beliefs and intentions), tongue (words) and body (physical actions).

By His wisdom, Allah has explained the ruling, which is the prohibition on following the footsteps of the *Shaytan*, and the wisdom behind the ruling, by highlighting the evil of the

prohibited deed, which dictates that one should stay away from it:

{whoever follows the footsteps of the Shaytan, he} namely the *Shaytan* **{only enjoins indecency}** that is, major sins that are regarded by common sense and religious teachings as indecent, even though there may be some inclination towards them

{and wickedness} - this refers to something that is denounced on the basis of reason and no one would approve of it. The sins that are described as being the footsteps of the *Shaytan* do not go beyond that. Allah has forbidden them to His slaves as a favor from Him, so they should give thanks to Him and remember Him, because this is protection for them against being contaminated with abhorrent and evil deeds. By His kindness towards them, He has forbidden these sins to them, as He has forbidden them to consume lethal poison and the like.

{Were it not for the grace and mercy of Allah towards you, not one of you would ever have been purified} that is, they would never have been purified from following the footsteps of the *Shaytan*, because the *Shaytan* and his troops strive hard to call people to sins and make them appear fair-seeming, and the *nafs* is inclined towards evil and prompts one to do it. Man by nature is prone to shortcomings in all aspects, and faith is not strong, so if man were to be left (without help) under the influence of these factors, no one would be purified by cleansing himself of sins and bad deeds, and by starting to do good deeds.

Purification requires cleansing oneself and doing good deeds. But Allah's grace and mercy dictate that some of you should be cleansed and purified. One of the supplications of the Prophet ﷺ was: «O Allah, grant my soul piety and purify it, for You are the best to purify it, You are its Guardian and its Lord.» (Muslim)

Hence Allah says:

{But Allah purifies whomever He wills}, who He knows is fit for that; hence He says: **{and Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing}**.

{Let not those among you who are people of virtue and wealth swear to cease giving [aid] to their kinsfolk, the needy and those who have migrated in Allah's cause. Rather let them pardon and overlook}. One of those who were involved in spreading the slander was Mistah ibn Athathah, who was a relative of Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq. Mistah was a poor man, one of those who had migrated in Allah's cause. Abu Bakr swore that he would no longer spend on him, because of what he had said. But then this verse was revealed, forbidding them to swear that they would no longer spend on them, and urging him to pardon and overlook, promising the forgiveness of Allah, if he forgave his relative:

{Do you not like for Allah to forgive you? For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful}; if you are forgiving towards His slaves, by pardoning and overlooking, then Allah will treat you likewise. When Abu Bakr heard this verse, he said: Nay, by Allah

I like that Allah should forgive me. And he resumed spending on Mistah.

This verse indicates that it is prescribed to spend on relatives, and one should not stop doing so, or stop showing kindness towards them, because of a sin that a person may commit. It is encouraged to pardon and overlook, no matter what sins a person may commit.

Then comes a stern warning against making accusations against chaste women:

{Verily those who make accusations against chaste women} that is, women who refrain from immoral acts

{who are innocent at heart} and such things never cross their minds

{and believers are cursed in this world and the hereafter} the curse can only be because of a major sin. It is highlighted that the curse is ongoing and will impact them in both realms

{and theirs will be a grievous punishment}. This is in addition to the curse; Allah will cast them far away from His mercy and will send against them His mighty vengeance.

That punishment will come on the Day of Resurrection, **{On the day when their own tongues, hands and feet will testify against them regarding what they used to do}**. Each of their physical faculties will testify against them, regarding what they did. They will be caused to speak by the One Who will cause

everything to speak, so it will not be possible to deny anything. He is just towards His slaves, for He will cause the witnesses to be from their own selves.

{On that day, Allah will give them in full their due recompense} that is, He will requite them for their deeds, giving the due recompense that is based on justice and fairness, and they will find their recompense in full, with nothing missing.

{...They will say: Woe to us! What sort of record is this, that leaves no deed, small or great, unaccounted for? They will find all they did recorded there, and your Lord will not wrong anyone} (al-Kahf 18: 49)

They will realize, in that great place of standing, that Allah is the Truth Who makes manifest all things. His sublime attributes are true, His deeds are true, worship of Him is true, the meeting with Him is true, His promise, His warning, His religious decree and His judgement are all true, and His Messengers are true, so there is nothing true except that which is with Allah and from Allah.

{Evil men are for evil women and evil women are for evil men} that is, everything that is evil of men, women, words and deeds is befitting for the one who is evil, for it is in harmony with him and is similar to him. And everything that is good of men, women, words and deeds is befitting for the one who is good, for it is in harmony with him and is similar to him.

This is general in meaning, and nothing is excluded from that. One of the most important implications of that is the fact that nothing is suitable for the Prophets - especially the Messengers of strong will among them, and especially our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, who is the best of all good people in absolute terms - except the best of women. Casting aspersions upon 'Aishah with regard to this matter is casting aspersions upon the Prophet ﷺ; he was the intended target of the slander fabricated by the hypocrites. From the mere fact that she was the wife of the Messenger ﷺ, it is known that she could not be anything but good and pure, innocent of this reprehensible action.

So how about when she is more than that? For she was the *siddeeqah* of women (that is, one who was strong and true in faith), the best, most knowledgeable and most pure of women, the beloved of the Messenger of the Lord of the worlds; revelation never came down to him ﷺ when he was under the cover of any of his other wives, apart from her.

Then Allah states that clearly, in such a way that no evildoer would have any justification for saying anything bad about her, and that there is no room left for doubt, as He says: **{Those [good people] are innocent of all that [the slanderers] say}**. This refers primarily to 'Aishah, but also to other chaste believing women who are innocent at heart **{they will have forgiveness}** that will cleanse all their sins **{and a generous provision}** in paradise, coming from the Most Generous Lord.

(77) Tell the believing men to avert their gaze

قال الله تعالى

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ
لَهُمْ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ

[النور: ٣٠]

Tell the believing men to avert their gaze [from that which is forbidden] and restrain their carnal desires; that will be more conducive to their purity. Verily Allah is well aware of all that they do.

[Surah an-Nur 24:30]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

That is, instruct the believers and tell those who have faith that prevents them from doing that which undermines faith:

{to avert their gaze} from looking at nudity, or at *non-mahram* women or beardless youths, where there is the fear that looking at them may lead to temptation; and tell them to avert their gaze from looking at worldly adornments that may be tempting and cause them to fall into that which is prohibited.

{and restrain their carnal desires} from prohibited sexual acts, in the vagina, anus or otherwise, and from allowing others to touch or look at their private parts

{that} caution with regard to the gaze and carnal desires

{will be more conducive to their purity} that is, it will be purer and better, and more effective in helping them to do righteous deeds. The one who restrains his carnal desires and his gaze will be pure and free of the evil that contaminates those who commit immoral deeds, and it will make his deeds pure, because of giving up the prohibited actions to which the soul may be inclined and may prompt one to do.

Whoever gives up something for the sake of Allah, Allah will compensate him with something better than it; whoever averts his gaze (from that which is forbidden), Allah will give him enlightenment. If a person restrains his carnal desires and averts his gaze from that which is forbidden, and that which leads to it, despite the pressure of desire, then he is more likely to refrain from other things. Therefore, Allah describes this as *hifdh* (lit. guarding, translated here as “restraining”) because if a person does not try hard to keep watch over the thing that he is guarding, and take proper measures to guard it, it will not be guarded. The same applies to the gaze and carnal desires: if he does not try hard to guard them and restrain them, they will cause him to fall into troubles and problems.

Think about how Allah gives instructions to restrain their carnal desires completely, because allowing them free reign is not permissible under any circumstances. But with regard to the gaze, He says **{to avert their gaze}**; the wording of the original

Arabic suggests that this is only to be done in part, because it is permissible to look in some cases, if there is a need for that, as in the case of one who is giving testimony, or one who wants to propose marriage, and so on. Then Allah reminds them that He is aware of all that they do, so that they will strive hard to protect themselves against that which is prohibited.

(78) Tell the believing women to avert their gaze, not show their adornments, and draw their headcovers.

قال الله تعالى

وَقُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَرِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَائِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنَىٰ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنَىٰ أَخَوَاتِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَائِهِنَّ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ أَوِ التَّابِعِينَ غَيْرِ أُولَىٰ الْأَرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ أَوِ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَىٰ عَوْرَاتِ النِّسَاءِ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ وَتَوْبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

[النور: ٣١]

Tell the believing women to avert their gaze [from that which is forbidden] and restrain their carnal desires, and not to show their adornments except what ordinarily appears thereof. And let them draw [part of] their headcovers over their chests and not show their adornments except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their [fellow Muslim] women, slaves whom they own, male retainers? who are free of physical desire, or small children

who still have no awareness of the private aspects of women. Nor let them stamp their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments. And, O believers, turn all together towards Allah in repentance, so that you may prosper.

[Surah an-Nur 24:31]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Having instructed the believing men to avert their gaze and restrain their carnal desires, Allah now instructs the believing women to do likewise:

{Tell the believing women to avert their gaze} and avoid looking at that which they are not supposed to look at, such as looking at men with desire and other kinds of prohibited looking.

{and restrain their carnal desires} by not allowing anyone to have intercourse with them, touch them or look at them in prohibited ways.

{and not to show their adornments} such as beautiful clothes and jewelry; the entire body comes under the heading of adornment.

Because the outer garment is something that cannot be concealed, Allah says: **{except what ordinarily appears thereof}** that is, the outer garment that is usually worn, so long as there is nothing in it that could cause temptation.

{And let them draw [part of] their headcovers over their chests}. This is in order to perfect their covering up. This

indicates that the adornment that is prohibited to show includes the entire body, as we have mentioned. Then Allah repeats the prohibition on showing adornment, then makes an exception from that:

{except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers} - this includes the father himself, and grandfathers, no matter how far the line of ascent reaches

{their sons, their husbands' sons} this includes sons and grandsons, no matter how far the line of descent reaches.

{their brothers, their brothers' sons} this includes both full brothers and half-brothers through the father or mother

{their sisters' sons, their [fellow Muslim] women} that is, it is permissible for women to look at one another in all cases. It may be that what is meant by "their women" is women of the same religion as them, namely other Muslim women. This is quoted as proof by those who say that it is not permissible for a *dhimmi* (non-Muslim) woman to see a Muslim woman (without *hijab*).

{slaves whom they own} it is permissible for a slave, if the woman owns him completely, to see his mistress, so long as he belongs to her. If that ownership comes to an end, in full or partially, then it is not permissible for him to see her.

{male retainers who are free of physical desire} that is, those who are dependent on you and are connected to you of

men who have no desire, such as one who has an intellectual disability and is not aware of what is going around him, or one who is impotent and has no desire, physical or otherwise. In this case it is not prohibited for these individuals to look at the woman.

{or small children who still have no awareness of the private aspects of women} that is, children below the age of discernment. It is permissible for them to look at *non-mahram* women. Allah gives the reason for that, which is that they have no awareness of the private aspects of women. In other words, they have no knowledge and no desire yet. This indicates that once the child has reached the age of discernment, women should cover in front of him, because he is now aware of the private aspects of women.

{Nor let them stamp their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments} that is, they should not stamp the ground with their feet so that the jewelry they are wearing, such as anklets and the like, makes a noise by which their adornments may be known, and thus become a means of temptation. From this verse and others is derived the principle of barring the means. If something is permissible in and of itself, but it may lead to something that is prohibited, or there is the fear that that may happen, then it is disallowed. Stamping the feet on the ground is permissible in principle, but if it is a means of making hidden adornment known, then it is disallowed.

Having issued these goodly instructions and this excellent advice, because it is inevitable that there will be some shortcomings on the part of the believers, Allah enjoins us to repent, as He says:

{And, O believers, turn all together towards Allah in repentance}, because the believer's faith calls him to repent. Then that is made a condition of attaining prosperity, as Allah says:

{so that you may prosper}, for there is no way to prosper except by repenting, which means giving up that which Allah hates, both inwardly and outwardly, and focusing on that which He loves, both inwardly and outwardly. This indicates that every believer needs to repent, because here Allah is addressing all the believers together. And He urges them to be sincere in repentance, as He says: **{turn all together towards Allah in repentance}** that is, not for any other purpose except seeking His pleasure; it should not be for any other purpose such as seeking protection from troubles in this world, or showing off and seeking to enhance one's reputation, or other corrupt purposes.

(79) Men who are not distracted by buying or selling

قال الله تعالى

فِي بُيُوتٍ أَذِنَ اللَّهُ أَنْ تُرْفَعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ
وَالْآصَالِ (٣٦) رِجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ
الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ
(٣٧) لِيَجْزِيََهُمُ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَيَزِيدَهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ
مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ (٣٨)

[النور : ٣٦-٣٨]

[Such lamps are lit] in houses [mosques] which Allah has ordained to be built so that His name may be remembered therein. In them His name is glorified morning and afternoon (36) By men who are not distracted by buying or selling from the remembrance of Allah, or from establishing prayer or giving zakah. They fear a day when hearts will quiver and eyes will stare fixedly (37) [Their hope is] that Allah may reward them according to the best of their deeds and give them yet more out of His bounty, for Allah bestows His abundance without measure on whomever He will (38)

[Surah an-Nur 24:36-38]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{By men} that is, at those times they glorify Allah, and what good men they are, for they are not those who give precedence to worldly pleasures or trade, and the distractions of business.

{who are not distracted by buying or selling} - this includes any type of earnings through exchange. These men, even if they do engage in trade, buying and selling - and there is nothing wrong with that - they are not distracted by that and they do not give it precedence over **{the remembrance of Allah, or from establishing prayer or giving zakah}**. Rather they make obedience and worship of Allah their ultimate desire and goal, and whatever gets in the way of that, they reject it.

Because forsaking worldly matters is very hard for most people, and love of earning by means of various kinds of trade is dear to them, and giving it up is very hard for most of them, and it may not come naturally to them to give precedence to the rights of Allah over that, He mentions that which will motivate them to do it by means of encouragement and warnings:

{They fear a day when hearts will quiver and eyes will stare fixedly} due to severe terror and emotional and physical turmoil. Hence they fear that day, so it becomes easy for them to do righteous deeds and give up that which distracts them from such deeds.

(80) The one who takes his own whims and desires as his god

قال الله تعالى

أَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ أَفَأَنْتَ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ وَكِيلًا (٤٣) أَمْ تَحْسَبُ
أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ
سَبِيلًا (٤٤)

[الفرقان : ٤٣-٤٤]

Have you seen the one who takes his own whims and desires as his god? Can you be his keeper? (43) Or do you think that most of them listen or understand? They are just like cattle; nay, they are further astray from the right path (44)

[Surah al-Furqan 25:43-44]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

Is there any misguidance worse than that of one who takes his own whims and desires as his god, so whatever he likes he does? Hence Allah says:

{Have you seen the one who takes his own whims and desires as his god?} Do you not feel amazed by his situation and see how misguided he is, whilst he believes that he is a man of high status?

{Can you be his keeper?} That is, you are not in control of him and you have no power over him; rather you are no more than a warner and you have done what is required of you, and his reckoning will be with Allah.

Then Allah comments on their extreme misguidance by noting that He has taken away their power of reasoning and hearing, and He likens them, in their misguidance, to grazing cattle that hear nothing except the sound of shouts and cries. Deaf, dumb, and blind, they do not understand (2: 171). Indeed, they are more astray than cattle, because the herdsman guides the cattle, so they are guided and they recognize the path that may lead to their doom, so they avoid it, and their fate is better than the fate of these people. Thus it becomes clear that the one who accuses the Messenger ﷺ of being misguided is more deserving of that description himself, and that any dumb animal is more guided than him.

(81) The true slaves of the Most Gracious

قال الله تعالى

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ
الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا (٦٣) وَالَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَمًا (٦٤)
وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا
(٦٥) إِنَّهَا سَاءَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا (٦٦) وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا
وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا (٦٧) وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا
آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَنْ
يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا (٦٨) يُضَاعَفْ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ
فِيهِ مُهَانًا (٦٩) إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ
اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا (٧٠) وَمَنْ تَابَ وَعَمِلَ
صَالِحًا فَإِنَّهُ يَتُوبُ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَتَابًا (٧١) وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَشْهَدُونَ الزُّورَ وَإِذَا
مَرُّوا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوا كِرَامًا (٧٢) وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِبَآئِتٍ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَخِرُّوا
عَلَيْهَا صُمًّا وَعَعْمِيَانًا (٧٣) وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا
وَذُرِّيَّتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا (٧٤) أُولَئِكَ يُجْزَوْنَ الْغُرْفَةَ
بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَيُلَقَّوْنَ فِيهَا تَحِيَّةً وَسَلَامًا (٧٥) خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا حَسَنَتْ
مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا (٧٦) قُلْ مَا يَعْبُؤُا بِكُمْ رَبِّي لَوْلَا دُعَاؤُكُمْ فَقَدْ كَذَّبْتُمْ
فَسَوْفَ يَكُونُ لِزَامًا (٧٧)

[الفرقان : ٦٣-٧٧]

The true slaves of the Most Gracious are those who walk humbly and with dignity on the earth and, when the ignorant address them, they say words of peace (63) those who spend the night prostrating and standing before their Lord (64) And who say: Our Lord, avert from us the punishment of hell, for verily its punishment is unrelenting (65) Indeed, it is an evil halting-place and an evil abode (66) And who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor stingy, but follow a middle path between the [two] (67) Those who do not call upon any other god besides Allah; and who do not kill, for that is forbidden by Allah, except in the course of justice; and who do not commit fornication or adultery, for whoever does any of these things will receive the punishment (68) The punishment will be doubled for them on the Day of Resurrection, and they will abide therein disgraced forever (69) Except those who repent and believe, and do righteous deeds; for them Allah will change their evil deeds into good deeds, for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful (70) Whoever repents to Allah and does righteous deeds has truly turned to Allah (71) Those who will not witness falsehood and, if they pass by [people engaged in] idle talk, they pass by with dignity (72) Those who, when they are reminded of the revelations of their Lord, do not turn a deaf ear and a blind eye to them (73) And those who say: Our Lord, let our spouses and children be a source of joy for us, and make us good examples for those who fear You (74) Those are the ones who will be rewarded with high places

in paradise for their patience and steadfastness; they will be met therein with greetings and salutations of peace (75) They will abide therein forever, an excellent halting-place and an excellent abode (76) Say [O Muhammad, to the disbelievers]: My Lord would not concern Himself with you, were it not for your supplication. But you have rejected the call, so it [punishment] is inevitable (77)

[Surah al-Furqan 25:63-77]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

Servitude to Allah is of **two** types: the **first** of which is being subject to His Lordship and His control and care. This includes all of humankind, both Muslims and disbelievers, righteous and evildoers; all of them are slaves under His care and control.

{There is no one in the heavens or on earth but he will come to the Most Gracious as a slave}. (Maryam 19: 93)

The **second** type is the servitude of those who are His slaves in the sense that they worship Him alone and are subject to His mercy. This is the servitude of His Prophets and close friends, and this is what is meant here. Hence Allah connected it to His name the Most Gracious, so as to indicate that they only attained this state because of His grace and mercy.

So He states that their attributes and characteristics are the best and most perfect of attributes and characteristics, and He describes them as {those who walk humbly and with dignity on

the earth} that is, they are humble towards Allah and towards His creation. Thus they are described as dignified, tranquil and humble towards Allah and towards His slaves.

{and, when the ignorant address them} in an ignorant manner

{they say words of peace} that is, they respond to them in such a manner that they are safe from sin and avoid responding to ignorance with ignorance. This is praise for their great forbearing, responding to evil with something better, pardoning the one who is ignorant, and thinking in a mature manner that enabled them to achieve that.

{those who spend the night prostrating and standing before their Lord} that is, they pray a great deal at night, showing sincere devotion towards their Lord and humbling themselves before Him. This is like the verse in which Allah says:

{Who forsake their beds, calling upon their Lord with fear and hope, and spend out of what We have provided for them. No soul knows what is kept hidden in store for them of delight as a reward for what they used to do.} (as-Sajdah 32: 16-17)

{And who say: Our Lord, avert from us the punishment of hell} that is, ward it off from us by keeping us away from that which leads to it, and forgiving us for what we did of deeds that may incur the punishment

{for verily its punishment is unrelenting} that is, ongoing.

{Indeed, it is an evil halting-place and an evil abode} this is a supplication from them by way of beseeching their Lord and expressing how great their need for Him is, for it is not in their power to withstand this punishment. That is so that they may remember the blessings of Allah to them, because diverting hardship will have a great impact and cause great joy, commensurate with the degree of the hardship that was diverted.

{And who, when they spend}, whether that spending is obligatory or recommended

{are neither extravagant} by spending more than is necessary, so that they come under the heading of those who spend to excess

{nor stingy} so that they come under the heading of miserliness, covetousness and neglecting people's rights and dues

{but} in their spending **{follow a middle path}** between the extremes of extravagance and miserliness, so they spend on that which is obligatory, such as *zakah*, expiation and other obligations, and they spend on what is appropriate, in an appropriate manner, without causing harm to themselves or others. This is part of their just and moderate character.

{Those who do not call upon any other god besides Allah}; rather they worship Him alone, devoting their worship solely to

Him as true monotheists, turning to Him alone and turning away from all others.

{and who do not kill, for that is forbidden by Allah} - this refers to killing Muslims and disbelievers who have covenants with the Muslims

{except in the course of justice} such as execution of murderers and previously married adulterers, and disbelievers whom it is permissible to kill (in the case of war)

{and who do not commit fornication or adultery}; rather they restrain their carnal desires: **{Except with their wives or any slave women they may own...}** (al-Mu'minoon 23: 6)

{for whoever does any of these things} that is, ascribing partners to Allah, killing unlawfully any soul that Allah has forbidden, or committing fornication or adultery, **{will receive the punishment}**.

Then Allah explains that further:

{The punishment will be doubled for them on the Day of Resurrection, and they will abide therein} that is, in the punishment, **{disgraced forever}**. The warning of eternal punishment is addressed to the one who does all three; that is confirmed and is inevitable; the same also applies to the one who ascribes partners to Allah. The warning of severe punishment is for each of these three sins, because it is either an ascription of partners to Allah or it is a major sin.

With regard to the murderer and the fornicator or adulterer, he will not be subject to eternal punishment, because the texts of the Qur'an and the Prophet's ﷺ *Sunnah* indicate that all the believers will be brought forth from hell, and no believer will abide therein forever, no matter what sins he commits. Allah mentions these three, because these are the worst of major sins. Ascribing partners to Him leads to destruction of religious commitment, murder destroys bodies and adultery destroys honor.

{Except those who repent} from these sins and others, by giving them up immediately, regretting what has been done in the past and firmly resolving not to do that again

{and believe} in Allah, with sound faith, which requires one to give up sin and do acts of obedience

{and do righteous deeds} that are enjoined by the Lawgiver, seeking thereby the pleasure of Allah.

{for them Allah will change their evil deeds into good deeds} that is, He will change their words and deeds, that would have been bad, into good words and deeds. So their ascription of partners to Allah is changed into sound faith, and their disobedience into obedience, and what they committed of bad deeds in the past, then repented sincerely from every one of them, in obedience to Allah, will be turned into good deeds, as is the apparent meaning of the verse.

Concerning that there is a *hadith* that speaks of the man whom Allah brought to account for some of his sins, and He enumerated them to him, then He replaced each bad deed with a good deed, so he said: «**O Lord, I have some bad deeds that I do not see here.**» (at-Tirmidhi). And Allah knows best.

{for Allah is Off-Forgiving} to the one who repents, and He forgives great sins

{Most Merciful} towards His slaves, as He calls them to repent after they challenged Him by committing major sins, then He guided them and enabled them to repent, then He accepted it from them.

{Whoever repents to Allah and does righteous deeds has truly turned to Allah} that is, he should know that his repentance is the most perfect thing he could do, because it is coming back to the path that leads to Allah, which is the essence of a person's happiness and success. So let him be sincere in his repentance, and let him purify it from any contamination of bad intentions. The point here is to urge the individual to make his repentance perfect and do it in the best manner, so that when he comes to the One to Whom he repented, Allah will give him a reward in full, commensurate with the perfection of his repentance.

{Those who will not witness falsehood} that is, they do not attend when false talk is occurring, namely unlawful words and deeds. So they avoid all gatherings in which there is unlawful talk or unlawful deeds, such as speaking scornfully about the

revelations of Allah, arguing on the basis of falsehood, backbiting, spreading malicious gossip, insulting, slander, ridiculing, unlawful music, drinking alcohol, silk furnishings, images and the like. If they do not witness falsehood, it is even more appropriate that they should not say or do anything that constitutes falsehood. If they do not witness falsehood, they will not speak falsehood, which includes giving false testimony.

{and, if they pass by [people engaged in] idle talk} this refers to talk in which there is nothing good and no benefit, whether spiritual or worldly, such as the speech of fools and the like **{they pass by with dignity}** that is, they respect themselves too much to indulge in such things, and they regard indulging in it - even if there is no sin involved - as foolishness and contrary to dignity, so they stay away from it in order to preserve their dignity.

The phrase **{and, if they pass by [people engaged in] idle talk}** indicates that they did not intend to be present or listen to it; rather that happened by coincidence, without any intention on their part. So they honor themselves by keeping away from it.

{Those who, when they are reminded of the revelations of their Lord} that they are instructed to listen to attentively and be guided by **{do not turn a deaf ear and a blind eye to them}** that is, they do not respond by turning away from them and turning a deaf ear to them, or turning away their eyes and hearts

from it, as those who do not believe in it do. Rather their reaction to it, when they hear it, is as Allah describes elsewhere:

{Only those believe in Our revelations who, when they are reminded of them, fall down in prostration, and glorify and praise their Lord, and they are not arrogant} (as-Sajdah 32: 15)

They respond by accepting it, showing their need for it and submitting to it. You will find that they listen attentively, contemplate the meanings in their hearts, and increase in faith and certainty thereby; they are energized by it and they rejoice greatly in it.

{And those who say: Our Lord, let our spouses} - the word translated here as **{spouses}** may include friends and companions, as well as spouses

{and children be a source of joy for us} that is, a delight to us. If we examine the situation of such people, we will realize that, as they have high ambitions and high status, they will not settle until they see their spouses and children obeying their Lord, having knowledge and acting on the basis thereof. As they pray for their spouses and children to follow the path of righteousness, they are, in a way, praying for themselves because the benefit of that comes back to them. Hence they regard that as a gift to them, as is reflected in the original Arabic, where the phrase translated as **{let our spouses and children be a source of joy for us}** carries the connotation of a gift that is given. Indeed, their supplication will be of benefit to all the

Muslims, for if those mentioned are righteous, many more will be righteous because of their connection to them, and they will benefit from them.

{and make us good examples for those who fear You} that is, help us to attain that high status, the status of those who are strong and true in faith, and those of the righteous slaves of Allah who are perfect. This is the status of leadership in terms of religion, so that they will be a good example to those who fear Allah in their words and deeds, and they will be people whose example is followed and whose words people trust, so that good people follow them and thus they are guided and guide others.

It is well known that supplication to attain something is also supplication for that means without which it cannot be attained. This status - the status of leadership in religion - can only be attained by means of patience and certain faith, as Allah says elsewhere: **{We made some of them leaders, guiding people by Our command, because they were patient and steadfast, and they believed with certainty in Our revelations}** (as-Sajdah 32: 24) This requires a great deal of effort and patience in obeying Allah and in refraining from disobedience to Him, accepting His decree even when it is painful, and acquiring perfect knowledge that will bring one to the level of certain faith.

Therefore - because their ambitions and goals were high - the reward matches the nature of the deeds, so Allah will reward them with lofty and high places, as He says:

{Those are the ones who will be rewarded with high places in paradise for their patience and steadfastness} that is, lofty places and beautiful dwellings, containing all that one could desire and that could delight the eye, and they will attain that because of their patience and steadfastness, as Allah says elsewhere: **{...Angels will enter unto them from every gate [saying]: Peace be upon you because you patiently persevered. How excellent is the ultimate end} (ar-Ra'd 13: 23-24)**

Hence He says here: **{they will be met therein with greetings and salutations of peace}** from their Lord, and from His noble angels, and from one another, and they will be safe from all that could spoil their joy.

Thus Allah describes them as being dignified, tranquil, humble towards Him and His slaves, well mannered, forbearing, and easy-going; they overlook the ignorant and turn away from them, responding to their bad treatment with good treatment; they pray *qiyam* (voluntary prayers at night), with complete sincerity; they fear the fire and beseech their Lord to save them from it; they spend what is obligatory and what is encouraged, and are moderate in spending, and if they are moderate in spending - when people usually go to extremes in this matter, either spending too much or too little - then it is more likely that they will be moderate in other matters.

They are free of major sins and are described as being sincere in their worship of Allah; they refrain from harming

people physically or impugning their honor, and they repent if they do any such thing. They do not attend gatherings in which there are immoral and evil words or deeds, and they do not do such things themselves; they protect themselves from idle talk and bad deeds in which there is no good. This is indicative of their dignity, humanity, perfection and rising above vile words or deeds.

They respond to the revelations of Allah by accepting them, understanding their meanings, acting upon them and striving hard to implement their rulings. They call upon Allah with the most perfect of supplications, from which they and those who are connected to them benefit, as do the Muslims at large, such as praying that their spouses and offspring will be righteous. This implies that they strive to teach them, exhort them and advise them, because the one who is keen to attain something and prays to Allah for it, should take measures to attain it. They pray to Allah to enable them to reach the highest possible level, which is the level of leadership and being strong and true in faith (*siddeeq*).

How sublime are these attributes; how noble are these aims and goals; how pure are these hearts and souls; and how pious are these leaders! Allah bestowed His grace, blessings and mercy upon them so that they were able to attain that status. It is a blessing from Allah to His slaves that He highlighted their attributes, described their manners and ambitions, and mentioned their reward, so that people may long to attain these

attributes and strive hard to do so, and ask the One Who blessed and honored them, Whose grace reaches all times and places, to guide them as He guided these people, and to bestow His special care upon them, as He did for these people.

O Allah, to You be praise, to You we complain, and You are the One Whose help we seek. There is no strength and no power except with You, for we have no power to benefit ourselves or ward off harm from ourselves, and we cannot do even an atom's weight of good unless You make it easy for us; verily we are weak and incapable in all ways.

We bear witness that if you left us to our own devices for even the blink of an eye, You would have left us to our weakness, helplessness and sin. Our Lord, we can only put our trust in Your mercy, by which You created us, granted us provision and bestowed blessings upon us both visible and hidden, and You warded off hardship from us. So have mercy on us, mercy that will suffice us so that we have no need of the mercy of anyone else, for the one who asks of You and puts his hope in You will never be disappointed.

As Allah encompasses all of these people in His mercy and singles them out to be His slaves, because of their honor and virtue, perhaps someone may wonder why others are not included as being His slaves? The answer is, as Allah tells us, that He would not care for anyone other than these, for were it not for your calling upon Him, with the supplication of worship and

the supplication of asking, He would not care about you or love you, as He says: **{Say [O Muhammad, to the disbelievers]: My Lord would not concern Himself with you, were it not for your supplication. But you have rejected the call, so it [punishment] is inevitable}** that is, punishment is inevitable, and Allah will judge between you and His believing slaves.

(82) The day when neither wealth nor sons will avail them; but only he who comes to Allah with a pure heart.

قال الله تعالى

يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ (٨٨) إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ (٨٩)

[الشعراء : ٨٨-٨٩]

**The day when neither wealth nor sons will be of any avail (88)
but only he who comes to Allah with a pure heart [will be
saved] (89)**

[Surah ash-Shu'araa 26:88-89]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

What is meant by the pure heart is that which is free of polytheism, doubt, love of evil, and persisting in innovation and sin. What is implied by being free of these things is that it possesses the opposite, namely sincerity to Allah alone, knowledge, certain faith, love of good and the inclination towards good; this means that what he wants and loves is in accordance with what Allah loves, and his whims and desires are in accordance with the teachings of Allah's religion.

(83) Lower your wing in humility and gentleness to the believers

قال الله تعالى

**فَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُعَذِّبِينَ (٢١٣) وَأَنْذِرْ
عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ (٢١٤) وَأَخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
(٢١٥) فَإِنْ عَصَوْكَ فَقُلْ إِنَّي بِرِيءٍ مِّمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ (٢١٦)**

[الشعراء : ٢١٣-٢١٦]

Do not call upon any other god alongside Allah, lest you be among those who will be punished (213) And [O Muhammad] warn your nearest kinsfolk (214) And lower your wing [in humility and gentleness] to the believers who follow you (215) Then if they [your kinsfolk] disobey you, say: I am not accountable for what you do (216)

[Surah ash-Shu'araa 26:213-216]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{And [O Muhammad] warn your nearest kinsfolk} who are the closest of people to you and are the most deserving of your kindness in both spiritual and worldly terms. This does not cancel out the command to warn all people, because if a person is instructed to be kind to all people, then it is said to him: Be kind to your relatives, this is emphasising the importance of kindness

to relatives and highlighting the fact that they have a particular right to that.

The Prophet ﷺ complied with this divine command, and he called the clans of Quraysh, addressing them in different ways, reminding them and admonishing them. He left no advice or guidance that he was able to offer but he said it; some of them were guided and some turned away.

{And lower your wing [in humility and gentleness] to the believers who follow you} by treating them gently, speaking gentle words to them, being friendly and showing love, a good attitude and perfect kindness towards them. And he ﷺ indeed did that. Allah says:

{It is by the mercy of Allah that you deal gently with them. If you had been harsh or hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you. So pardon them, and ask for [Allah's] forgiveness for them; and consult them in matters of importance...} [Al Imran 3: 159]

This attitude on the part of the Prophet ﷺ was the most perfect attitude, by means of which great interests may be served and great harm may be warded off, as anyone can see.

So is it befitting for one who believes in Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, and claims to be following him, to be a burden on the Muslims, ill-mannered, harsh towards them, hard-hearted, rough and foulmouthed, and if he sees any sin or bad manners on their part, he shuns them, resents them and hates them?

There is no gentleness in such a person, and no manners or etiquette. Many evils result from the way he deals with people, and many interests are blocked, yet despite that you find him looking down on those who possess attributes like those of the noble Messenger ﷺ. He accuses them of hypocrisy and compromise, and he thinks of himself as perfect, regarding himself as being of high status and admiring his deeds. Does this result from anything but ignorance and the deceit of the *Shaytan* who makes his attitude fair-seeming to him? Hence Allah says to His Messenger ﷺ:

{Then if they [your kinsfolk] disobey you} with regard to any matter, do not disown them and do not stop dealing with them on the basis of humility and gentleness. Rather what you should disavow is their deeds, so admonish them for that and advise them, and do your utmost to prevent them doing such deeds and urge them to repent.

This is in order to avoid giving the wrong impression to one who may misunderstand and think that the words **{And lower your wing [in humility and gentleness] to the believers)}** implies approving of everything that they do, so long as they are believers. This notion is warded off by this verse. And Allah knows best.

(84) Moosa and the two women

قال الله تعالى

فَجَاءَتْهُ إِحْدَاهُمَا تَمْشِي عَلَى اسْتِحْيَاءٍ قَالَتْ إِنَّ أَبِي يَدْعُوكَ لِيَجْزِيَكَ أَجْرَ مَا سَقَيْتَ لَنَا ۖ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُ وَقَصَّ عَلَيْهِ الْقَصَصَ قَالَ لَا تَخَفْ ۖ نَجَوْتَ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ (٢٥) قَالَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا يَأَبْتَ اسْتَغْرِهْ ۖ إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنْ اسْتَغْرَتْ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ (٢٦) قَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُنكِحَكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ عَلَى أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي ثَمَنِي حَجْجٍ ۖ فَإِنْ أَتَمَمْتَ عَشْرًا فَمِنْ عِنْدِكَ ۖ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَشُقَّ عَلَيْكَ ۖ سَتَجِدُنِي إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ (٢٧) قَالَ ذَلِكَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ ۖ أَيَّمَا الْأَجَلَيْنِ قَضَيْتُ فَلَا عُدْوَانَ عَلَيَّ ۖ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى مَا نَقُولُ وَكِيلٌ (٢٨)

[القصص : ٢٥-٢٨]

Then one of the two women came to him, walking modestly, and said: My father is asking you to come so that he may reward you for watering [our flock] for us. When he came to him and told him his story, he said: Fear not, for [now] you are safe from the wicked people (25) One of the two women said: O father, hire him, for the best person whom you can hire is one who is strong and trustworthy (26) He said [to Moosa]: I intend to give you one of these two daughters of mine in marriage, on condition that you work for me for eight years,

and if you make it ten, that will be of your own accord. I do not intend to make things difficult for you. You will find me, if Allah so wills, an upright man (27) Moosa said: Let that be the agreement between me and you. Whichever term I fulfil; I will be free from further obligation. And Allah is witness to what we say (28)

[Surah al-Qasas 28:25-28]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

The two women went to their father and told him what had happened, then their father sent one of them to Moosa. She came, **{walking modestly}**, which is indicative of her noble character and good attitude, for modesty is a virtuous characteristic, especially in women.

This indicates that Moosa, in what he did for them, was not like a hired worker or servant, in front of whom one would not usually feel shy or behave modestly. Rather he was a man of dignity, and from his good manners and sublime attitude, she saw that which made her behave modestly towards him. She said to him: **{My father is asking you to come so that he may reward you for watering [our flock] for us}** not by way of trying to show generosity, for it was you who took the initiative in showing kindness to us; rather he wants to return the favor. So Moosa accepted the invitation.

{When he came to him and told him his story} and the reason why he had fled, until he reached this land, the older man

said to him, so as to reassure him and comfort him, **{Fear not, for [now] you are safe from the wicked people}** that is, let your fear be gone, for Allah has saved you from them and enabled you to reach this place where they have no authority.

{One of the two women} that is, one of his two daughters **{said: O father, hire him}** that is, make him your employee so that he may take care of the sheep and water them,

{for the best person whom you can hire is one who is strong and trustworthy} that is, Moosa is the best one you could hire because he combines physical strength and honesty, and the best one to hire is the one who combines physical strength and the ability to do what he was hired to do, with honesty so that he will not betray his master.

These two characteristics should be taken into account when hiring anyone to do work, because problems only arise when one or both of these characteristics is lacking. But if they are combined, then the work will be done properly. She only said that because she had seen Moosa's physical strength and energy when he watered the flocks for them and she had seen his trustworthiness and religious commitment, and how he had shown compassion towards them in a situation in which there was no hope of him benefitting from that; rather his only aim in helping them had been to seek the pleasure of Allah.

(85) Lessons from the story of Moosa and Pharaoh

قال الله تعالى

﴿طَسَمَ (۱)﴾ إِلَى قَوْلِهِ ﴿وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ﴾

﴿(۵۱)﴾

[القصص : ۱-۵۱]

{Ta. Seen. Meem. (1)} to {Now We have caused Our word to reach them in stages, so that they may pay heed (51)}

[Surah al-Qasas 28:1-51]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Some lessons that we learn from this wondrous story:

- The signs and lessons of Allah, and the stories He tells us of the previous nations, only benefit and enlighten the believers. What the individual learns from these stories will be commensurate with his level of faith. Allah only tells the stories for the believers' sake; as for others, Allah does not care about them and they will receive no light or guidance from these stories.
- When Allah wills something, he prepares the means that lead to it and brings it about stage by stage, gradually, not all in one go.

- No matter how weak an oppressed nation becomes, it should not give in to laziness and give up pursuing its rights, or despair of regaining power and reaching a high level, especially if it is oppressed. Allah saved the Children of Israel, who were a weak nation, from the captivity of Pharaoh and his chiefs, and He gave them power and control over their land.

- So long as a nation is subjugated and humiliated, and cannot stand up for its rights or speak for itself, it will not be able to take care of its religious or worldly affairs, and will not be able to play a leading role.

- Allah showed kindness to the mother of Moosa, and alleviated the calamity for her by giving her glad tidings that Allah would return her son to her and make him one of the Messengers.

- Allah may decree some hardship for His slave, so as to make him attain greater happiness, or to ward off some greater harm, as He decreed that intense grief and worry for the mother of Moosa, that were the means of bringing her son back to her, reassuring her, comforting her and increasing her joy and happiness.

- Natural fear of people is not contrary to faith and does not diminish it, as we see in the case of the mother of Moosa and Moosa himself.

- Faith may increase and decrease, but one of the greatest means of increasing faith and perfecting certainty is having patience in the face of trouble and feeling confident of the help of Allah

when calamity strikes, as Allah tells us about the mother of Moosa: **{She would have disclosed who he was, had We not strengthened her heart so that she might maintain her faith [in the promise of Allah]} (28: 10)** that is, so that her faith would increase and she would be reassured.

- One of the greatest of Allah's blessings to His slave and one of the greatest ways in which He helps His slave in his affairs is His making him steadfast and strengthening his resolve at the time of fear and overwhelming calamity, thus enabling him to say and do the right thing. This is in contrast to the one who is overwhelmed by worries, fear and panic; he does not think straight and he loses his focus, so he is not able to help himself in that situation.

- Even if a person knows that the divine will and decree and the promise of Allah will inevitably come to pass, he should not neglect to take proper measures as Allah has instructed, and that is not contrary to faith in the promise of Allah. Allah promised the mother of Moosa that He would return her son to her, yet she took measures to bring him back, and she sent his sister to track him down and find out where he was.

- It is permissible for a woman to go out and attend to her own needs, and to speak to men provided that there is no reason for caution, as the sister of Moosa and the two daughters of the man of Madyan did.

- It is permissible to receive payment for raising and breastfeeding a child, and to help someone find a woman who will do that.
- By His mercy towards His weak slave whom He wants to honor, Allah may show him some of His signs and proof, so as to increase him in faith, as Allah returned Moosa to his mother, so that she would know that the promise of Allah is true.
- Killing a disbeliever who has a covenant with the Muslims or who is regarded as being under a covenant with them on the basis of custom is not permissible. Moosa regarded his killing of the Egyptian disbeliever as a sin, and he asked Allah to forgive him for it.
- The one who kills people unlawfully is regarded as one of the tyrants who spread mischief in the land.
- The one who kills people unlawfully and claims that he only wants to put things right in the land and deter evildoers is a liar and is spreading mischief, as Allah tells us that the Egyptian said: **{...do you intend to kill me as you killed a man yesterday? Your aim is only to become a tyrant in the land; you do not intend to be one of those who put things right} (28: 19)**. Allah said this by way of approving of these words, not saying that they were incorrect.
- Telling someone what is being said about him, by way of warning him of some evil that may befall him, is not regarded as spreading malicious gossip. In fact, it may be obligatory, as that

man came and told Moosa by way of offering sincere advice and warning him (28: 20).

- If a person fears that he may be killed or harmed if he stays where he is, he should not allow himself to be destroyed or surrender to that. Rather he should leave, as Moosa did.

- If there are two choices that will lead to harm, but an individual has no alternative but to choose one of them, he should choose the one that leads to lesser harm, as Moosa did when he had the choice of either remaining in Egypt, but he would be killed, or going to some distant land to which he did not know the route and he had no guide to show him the way except his Lord, but this was more likely to lead to safety than the first option, so Moosa chose it.

- With regard to one who is researching an issue of knowledge and needs to give a verdict, if he cannot be certain that one of the two views is correct, he should seek the guidance of his Lord and ask Him to guide him to the correct view, after sincerely searching for the truth, for Allah will not disappoint one who is like that. This is what Moosa did when he set out for Madyan:

{As he headed towards Madyan, he said: I hope my Lord will show me the right way [on my journey]} (28: 22).

- Showing mercy to people and being kind to them, whether you know them or not, is one of the characteristics of the Prophets. That kindness includes watering livestock and helping those who are unable to help themselves.

- It is recommended to offer supplication, explaining one's situation and what one needs, even though Allah knows it well, because He loves for His slave to beseech Him and express his humility and need for Him, as Moosa said: **{O my Lord, I am in need of whatever good You may bestow upon me} (28: 24).**
- Modesty and shyness, especially in people of dignity and noble character, are praiseworthy characteristics.
- Offering recompense for favors and kindness is an attitude that has existed since the time of the earlier generations.
- If a person does something for the sake of Allah, then receives recompense without having had that in mind from the outset, he is not to be blamed for that. Moosa accepted recompense for his act of kindness from the man of Madyan, although he had not sought it and had never thought of receiving any recompense.
- It is permissible to hire someone to tend sheep and do similar tasks that may not be well defined and may be worked out on the basis of custom. It is permissible to hire someone in return for benefit, even if that benefit is in the form of marriage.
- A man may offer his daughter in marriage to another man whom he has chosen for her, and there is nothing wrong with that.
- The best worker whom a man may employ is the one who is strong and honest.

- One of the best of good attitudes and manners is to show kindness towards workers and servants, and not impose too much work on them, because Allah tells us that the man of Madyan said: **{I do not intend to make things difficult for you. You will find me, if Allah so wills, an upright man} (28: 27).**
- It is permissible to make contracts for work and other matters without witnesses, because Moosa said: **{And Allah is witness to what we say} (28: 28).**
- Allah caused clear signs and miracles to occur at the hand of Moosa, such as the snake, his hand turning white without harm, and the protection that Allah granted to Moosa and Haroon against Pharaoh and against drowning.
- One of the greatest punishments that may befall a man is to become a leader in evil, and that will be commensurate with the level of his opposition to the revelations and signs of Allah. By the same token, one of the greatest blessings that Allah may bestow upon His slave is to make him a leader in good, so that he is guided and guides others.
- This story offers proof for the message of Muhammad ﷺ, as this story is narrated in detail, in accordance with what really happened, and in a way that confirms the message of the Messengers and supports the clear truth, without him having been present at any of these events or having visited any of these places. He ﷺ never read or studied anything about any of these matters, or discussed them with any of the people of

knowledge. It is nothing but the message of the Most Gracious, Most Merciful, and revelation that was sent down to him ﷺ by the Most Generous, the Bestower of blessings, so that he might warn thereby people who were ignorant and who had never been warned before or received any message.

Blessings and peace of Allah be upon the one whose very words indicated that he was the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and whose instructions and prohibitions signaled to wise people that this message was from Allah. How could it be otherwise, when there was so much evidence to prove the soundness of the message he brought, namely: the earlier and later scriptures; the law he brought; the character of the Prophet ﷺ which was based on the best attitude and manners, such as can only be suited to one who is the best of people; and the clear victory granted to his religion and nation, to the extent that his religion reached as far as night and day, and his nation conquered most of the world with the sword and spear, and hearts were won over with knowledge and faith? But stubborn nations and disbelieving rulers who are standing together against the *Ummah* are uniting against Islam and plotting against it, scheming to extinguish its light, destroy it and erase it from the face of the earth. But Islam has defeated them and prevailed over them, and is still growing; its signs and proofs become ever more manifest in every age, and new signs emerge which offer lessons to all people, guidance to those who have knowledge, and enlightenment to those who pay heed. Praise be to Allah alone.

(86) You cannot guide whomever you like, but Allah guides whomever He wills.

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ
بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

[القصص : ٥٦]

Verily, you [O Muhammad] cannot guide whomever you like, but Allah guides whomever He wills, and He knows best who is rightly guided.

[Surah al-Qasas 28:56]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah is saying: You, O Muhammad ﷺ - and others even more so - cannot guide anyone, even if he is among the dearest of people to you. This is something that is beyond the ability of all people, to guide in the sense of making them believe and creating faith in their hearts. Rather that is in the Hand of Allah and He guides whomever He wills, and He knows best who is fit to be guided, so He guides him, and who is not fit to be guided, so He leaves him to go astray.

With regard to the verse in which it is affirmed that the Messenger ﷺ guides people - **{...Verily, you are indeed calling**

people to a straight path.} [ash- Shoora 42: 52] - that is guidance in the sense of explaining and teaching. The Messenger ﷺ explains the straight path and urges people to follow it, and he does his utmost to persuade people to follow it. As for instilling faith in their hearts and enabling them to do righteous deeds, there is no way that he can do that.

Therefore, if he ﷺ had been able to do that, he would have guided the one who had been kind to him, supported him and protected him from his people, namely his paternal uncle Abu Talib. But he was more kind to his uncle as he called him to Islam and was very sincere towards him, which was greater than what his uncle had done for him, but guidance is in the Hand of Allah.

(87) That which is with Allah is better and more lasting

قال الله تعالى

**وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ فَمَتَّعُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزَيَّنْتُهَا ۚ وَمَا عِندَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ
وَأَبْقَى ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ**

[القصص : ٦٠]

Whatever you have been given is but the enjoyment of the life of this world and its splendor; but that which is with Allah is better and more lasting. Will you not then understand?

[Surah: al-Qasas 28:60]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah urges His slaves to have little interest in this world and not to be deceived by it; rather they should focus on the hereafter and make that their main aim and goal. He tells them that all that people are given of gold, silver, animals, belongings, wives, sons, food, drink and pleasure is but the enjoyment of the life of this world and its splendor. In other words, these things are enjoyed only for a short while and bring brief pleasure, but that enjoyment will be interrupted by a great deal of trouble and strife.

A person may enjoy these adornments for a short time, which gives him a reason for pride and showing off, but they will

quickly disappear and all come to an end, and he will not gain anything from that except loss, regret, disappointment and deprivation.

{but that which is with Allah} of eternal bliss and sound living **{is better and more lasting}** that is, it is better in terms of both quality and quantity, and it is eternal and everlasting.

{Will you not then understand} That is, do you not have minds with which to reflect and decide what should be given precedence and which of the two realms is more deserving of being striven for?

This indicates that the more rational a person is, the more he will give precedence to the hereafter over this world, and no one gives precedence to this world unless there is a deficiency in his reasoning. Hence Allah points out the importance of weighing up the fate of the one who gives precedence to this world and the fate of the one who gives precedence to the hereafter.

**(88) Do people think that once they say: We believe,
they will be left alone and not be tested?**

قال الله تعالى

**الْم (١) أَحَسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ (٢)
وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ
الْكَاذِبِينَ (٣)**

[العنكبوت : ١-٣]

Alif. Lam. Meem (1) Do people think that once they say: We believe, they will be left alone and not be tested? (2) Indeed We tested those who came before them. For Allah will surely make known those who are sincere and will surely make known those who are liars (3)

[Surah al-Ankaboot 29:1-3]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah tells us of the perfect nature of His wisdom, and that His wisdom does not dictate that anyone who says that he is a believer and claims to have faith will be safe from trials and tests, and will not be exposed to that which may cause confusion with regard to their faith and related issues. If that were the case, there would be nothing to distinguish one who is sincere from one who is lying, or the follower of truth from the follower of

falsehood. Rather His way with the earlier nations and with this *Ummah* is to test them by means of ease and hardship, times when one feels energized and times when one feels reluctant, wealth and poverty, causing their enemies to have the upper hand over them at times, and causing them to strive against the enemy in word and deed, and other kinds of tests, all of which may lead to confusion that is indicative of doubts and overwhelming desires on his part.

When faced with doubts, whoever does not waver in his faith and wards off those doubts by means of the truth in which he believes, and when faced with desires that would call him to sin or error, or distract him from that which Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have enjoined, he still persists in doing as faith dictates, striving against his desires, this is proof of the sincerity and soundness of his faith. But when faced with specious arguments that impact his heart by stirring up doubts and confusion, and when faced with desires that lead him to commit sin or that distract him from doing obligatory deeds, if a person yields to those pressures, this indicates that his faith is not sound or sincere.

People are of varying degrees in this regard, and only Allah knows the level at which anyone is. We ask Allah to make us steadfast with the word that stands firm in this world and in the hereafter, and to make our hearts steadfast in adhering to His religion, for tests and trials are like the bellows that eliminate dross and make hearts good.

(89) Prayer keeps one away from obscenity and wickedness

قال الله تعالى

أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ
الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ

[العنكبوت : ٤٥]

Recite what has been revealed to you [O Muhammad] of the Book, and establish prayer, for verily prayer keeps [one] away from obscenity and wickedness. And indeed your remembering Allah is of greater merit [than other acts of worship]. And Allah knows all that you do.

[Surah al-Ankaboot 29:45]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah instructs us to recite His revelation, which is this great Book. What is meant by reciting it is following it, complying with what it enjoins, avoiding what it prohibits, following its guidance, believing its stories, pondering its meanings, and reciting its phrases. Reciting its words is just part of what is meant.

As this is what is meant by reciting the Book, it is known that establishing the entire religion is included in recitation of the Book. The words **{and establish prayer}** come under the heading

of mentioning a specific part of the whole, because of the virtue and importance of the prayer, and the good effect of the prayer, for **{verily prayer keeps [one] away from obscenity and wickedness}**.

Obscenity is that which is regarded as grave and offensive of sins that one may desire and have the inclination to do. Wickedness refers to everything that is regarded as abhorrent and wrong on the basis of rational thinking and sound human nature.

The reason why prayer keeps one away from obscenity and wickedness is that if a person establishes prayer, fulfilling its essential parts and conditions, and focusing with proper humility, it will illuminate and purify his heart, increase him in faith, strengthen his desire to do good, and reduce or eliminate his desire to do evil. So praying regularly and persisting in praying in that manner will inevitably keep one away from obscenity and wickedness. This is one of the great aims and outcomes of prayer.

There is also another goal of prayer that is greater and more important than that, which is what the prayer involves of remembering Allah in one's heart as well as verbally and physically. Allah only created humankind to worship Him, and the best act of worship that people may perform is prayer, because in it all his faculties manifest servitude to Him, which is not the case with other acts of worship.

Hence Allah says: **{And indeed your remembering Allah is of greater merit [than other acts of worship]}.**

It may be that when Allah enjoined and praised prayer, He said that remembrance of Him outside of prayer is of greater merit than prayer, as is the view of the majority of commentators. But the first view is more likely to be correct, because prayer is better than remembrance of Allah outside of prayer, and because it - as mentioned above - in and of itself is one of the greatest forms of remembrance of Allah.

{And Allah knows all that you do} of good and evil, and He will requite you for that in full.

(90) Those who strive in Our cause, We will sure guide them to Our paths.

قال الله تعالى

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

[العنكبوت : ٦٩]

As for those who strive hard in Our cause, We will surely guide them to Our paths, for verily Allah is with the doers of good.

[Surah al-Ankaboot 29:69]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

{As for those who strive hard in Our cause} - this refers to those who migrated in Allah's cause, strove in *jihad* against their enemies and did their utmost to follow the path that would earn His pleasure **{We will surely guide them to Our paths}** that is, that paths that lead to Us, because they are doers of good.

{for verily Allah is with the doers of good}; He gives them help, support and guidance. This indicates that the most likely of people to be in accordance with what is right are the people of *jihad*, and that whoever does well in doing what he is commanded to do, Allah will help him and make means of guidance available to him; whoever strives hard to seek Islamic knowledge, will attain guidance and divine help to achieve his goals to an extent that goes beyond his efforts. Learning will be

made easy for him, because seeking Islamic knowledge comes under the heading of *jihad* in the cause of Allah; in fact, it is one of the two types of *jihad*, that is not undertaken by any but the elite of humankind, namely verbal *jihad* against the disbelievers and hypocrites, and *jihad* in the sense of teaching people about religion and refuting the arguments of those who drift away from the truth, even if they are Muslims.

(91) He created for you from among yourselves spouses

قال الله تعالى

وَمِنْ ءَايَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ
بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

[الروم : ٢١]

Among His signs is this: He created for you from among yourselves spouses, so that you might find comfort in them, and He has instilled love and compassion between you. Verily in that there are signs for people who reflect.

[Surah ar-Room 30:21]

◆ **Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:**

{Among His signs} that point to His mercy and care for His slaves, and His great wisdom and all-encompassing knowledge

{is this: He created for you from among yourselves spouses} who feel in harmony with you and you feel in harmony with them, and you are compatible with one another.

{so that you might find comfort in them, and He has instilled love and compassion between you} because of what results from marriage of love and compassion.

Thus a man will find physical pleasure in his wife, and the benefit of having and raising children, and he will find comfort in

his spouse. Usually you will not find between any two people what you find between spouses of love and mercy.

{Verily in that there are signs for people who reflect} and use their minds to reflect upon the signs of Allah, and in one thing they find an indication of another.

(92) Corruption and disorder have appeared on land and sea because of what people's hands have earned

قال الله تعالى

**ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ
الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ**

[الروم : ٤١]

Corruption and disorder have appeared on land and sea because of what people's hands have earned. Thus Allah causes them to taste the consequences of some of what they have done, so that they may turn in repentance.

[Surah ar-Room 30:41]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

That is, corruption has appeared on land and sea, meaning that their livelihood has declined, with blight damaging the crops, sicknesses and epidemics sweeping over the people, and so on. That is because of what their hands have wrought of corrupt deeds that spread corruption far and wide.

The things mentioned have occurred so that Allah might cause them **{to taste the consequences of some of what they have done}** that is, so that they might realise that He is the One

Who requites people for their deeds, so He gives a foretaste of the requital for their deeds in this world,

{so that they may turn in repentance} from their evil deeds, which have resulted in so much corruption and harm, and they may set their affairs straight.

Glory be to the One Who brings about blessings through His trials and tests, and Who bestows grace through His punishment. Otherwise, if He caused them to taste the consequences of all that they have earned, He would not leave any living creature on the face of the earth.

(93) Luqman's advice to his son

قال الله تعالى

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ
لِنَفْسِهِ ۚ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ (١٢) وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ ۚ
وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَبْنَىٰ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ (١٣) وَوَصَّيْنَا
الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَلَدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصْلُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنْ
اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَلَدَيْكَ إِلَىٰ الْمَصِيرِ (١٤) وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا
لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ ۚ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا وَاتَّبِعْ
سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (١٥)
يَبْنَىٰ إِنَّهَا إِنْ تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُنْ فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي
السَّمَوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ (١٦) يَبْنَىٰ
أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأَصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَكَ إِنَّ
ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزَمِ الْأُمُورِ (١٧) وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي
الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ (١٨) وَأَقْصِدْ فِي
مَشْيِكَ وَاعْغِضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ (١٩)

[لقمان : ١٢-١٩]

Indeed, We granted wisdom to Luqman, [saying]: Be grateful to Allah. Whoever is grateful, his gratitude is to his own benefit, and whoever is ungrateful, then surely Allah is Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise (12) And [remember] when Luqman said to his son as he was advising him: O my son, do not associate anything in worship with Allah, for associating others in worship with Him is indeed grievous wrongdoing (13) We have enjoined upon man kindness to his parents. In travail upon travail his mother bears him, and his weaning takes place within two years. Be grateful to Me and to your parents. Unto Me is the return [of all] (14) But if they endeavor to make you ascribe partners to Me of which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them. But keep company with them in this world kindly, and follow the way of those who turn to Me. Then to Me you will all return, and I will inform you about what you used to do (15) [Luqman said:] O my son, even if [a deed] is the weight of a grain of mustard seed, and it is hidden in a rock, or in the heavens, or in the earth. Allah will bring it forth. Verily Allah is the Knower of subtleties, the All-Aware (16) O my son, establish prayer, enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong; be patient and steadfast in the face of whatever befalls you: that is something that must be adhered to, [as it is enjoined by Allah] (17) Do not turn your face away from people [in contempt], and do not walk on the earth with insolence. Verily Allah does not love anyone who is conceited and boastful (18) Be

moderate in your gait and lower your voice; verily the most hideous of sounds is the voice [braying] of the donkey (19)

[Surah Luqman 31:12-19]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah tells us of the blessing of wisdom that He bestowed upon His virtuous slave Luqman, which refers to attaining proper knowledge concerning the truth and understanding the wisdom behind different issues of knowledge. That is knowledge of rulings and learning the subtle reasons behind them and how precise and proper they are. A man may be knowledgeable without being wise. Wisdom is based on knowledge and also on actions. Hence wisdom is described as being beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds.

Having bestowed this great blessing upon him, Allah instructed him to give thanks for what He had given him, so that He might bless it for him and increase him in virtue. He told him that the benefit of gratitude comes back to the grateful, but if a person is ungrateful and does not give thanks to Allah, the negative consequences of that will come back to him. Allah has no need of such a person, and He is praiseworthy in all that He decrees and ordains for the one who goes against His command. Among His essential attributes, He has no need of anyone and He is praiseworthy for all His perfect attributes and praiseworthy for all His beautiful actions. Each of these two attributes is an

attribute of perfection, and adding one of them to the other is perfection upon perfection.

The commentators differed as to whether Luqman was a Prophet or a righteous slave. Allah only tells us that He gave him wisdom and told us something about his exhortation of his son which is indicative of his wisdom, namely the foundations and main pillars of wisdom.

{And [remember] when Luqman said to his son as he was advising him}, or he said some words to him, exhorting him with commands and prohibitions, encouragement and warnings. He instructed him to show sincere devotion to Allah alone, and forbade him to ascribe partners to Him, explaining to him the reason for that by saying: **{for associating others in worship with Him is indeed grievous wrongdoing}**. The reason why it is grievous is that there is nothing more horrendous or abhorrent than one who regards that which was created from dust as equal to the Sovereign of all things, and he regards the one who has no control over anything as equal to the One Who has control over all things, and he regards one who is lacking in all ways as equal to the perfect Lord Who is self-sufficient in all respects, and he regards the one who does not bestow even an atom's weight of blessings as equal to the One Who bestows every single blessing that is bestowed upon humankind in terms of their spiritual and worldly affairs, and Who wards off evil from them. Can there be any wrongdoing more grievous than this?

Is there any wrongdoing greater than that of one whom Allah created to worship Him and affirm His oneness, yet he decides to degrade his noble soul and bring it down to the lowest of ranks by making it a worshipper of that which has no value, thus wronging himself greatly?

Having enjoined fulfilment of His rights by refraining from ascribing partners to Him, which means adhering to affirmation of His oneness, Allah then enjoined fulfilment of the rights of parents:

{We have enjoined upon man kindness to his parents} that is, We have commanded him and given him instructions to that effect, and We will question him as to how he did that and whether he complied or not. We said to him:

{Be grateful to Me} by worshipping Me, fulfilling My rights and not using My blessings to disobey Me

{and to your parents} by showing kindness to them, speaking gently to them, behaving nicely with them, being humble towards them, honoring them, respecting them, taking care of them, and avoiding mistreating them in any way, in word or deed.

We gave him this advice and We told him that **{Unto Me is the return [of all]}** that is, you - O humankind - will all return to the One Who instructed you and enjoined these duties upon you, and He will ask you: did you fulfil them, so that He might

reward you immensely? Or did you neglect them, so that He might punish you severely?

Then He tells us the reason why parents are to be honored, which has to do with the mother:

{In travail upon travail his mother bears him} that is, in hardship upon hardship; she continues to go through hardship, from the time when he is a sperm drop, faced with cravings, sickness, weakness, heaviness and changing moods, which is followed by the severe pain of childbirth.

Then **{his weaning takes place within two years}** and throughout these two years he enjoys the care of his mother. Is it not appropriate that in the case of the one who bears all this hardship because of her child, yet loves him dearly, the child is emphatically enjoined and instructed to show the highest level of kindness to that person?

{But if they} namely your parents **{endeavor to make you ascribe partners to Me of which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them}** and do not think that this comes under the heading of kind treatment of them, because the rights of Allah take precedence over the rights of anyone else, and:

«There is no obedience to any created being if it involves disobedience towards the Creator.» (Recorded by at-Tabrayzi; al-Albani graded it as sound)

Allah did not say "But if they endeavor to make you ascribe partners to Me of which you have no knowledge, then treat them badly or be defiant towards them." Rather He said **{then do not obey them}** that is, by ascribing partners to Allah. As for honoring them and treating them kindly, one should persist in that. Hence Allah says: **{But keep company with them in this world kindly}** that is, keep them company in a kind way. As for following them, when they are in a state of disbelief and disobedience, do not follow them. **{and follow the way of those who turn to Me}** namely those who believe in Allah, His angels, His Books and His Messengers, those who submit to their Lord and turn to Him.

Following their path means behaving like them in turning to Allah, meaning that all of one's emotions and will are focused on Allah, which is then followed by physically taking action to do that which pleases Allah and brings one closer to Him.

{Then to Me you will all return} both those who obey Allah and those who disobey Him, those who turn to Him and those who do not **{and I will inform you about what you used to do}** for nothing is hidden from Allah of their deeds.

{[Luqman said:] O my son, even if [a deed] is the weight of a grain of mustard seed} which is the smallest and most insignificant of things **{and it is hidden in a rock}** that is, in the middle of it **{or in the heavens, or in the earth}** in any direction whatsoever, **{Allah will bring it forth}** because of His vast

knowledge, perfect awareness and perfect might. Hence He says: **{Verily Allah is the Knower of subtleties, the All-Aware}** that is, He is subtle in His knowledge and awareness, to the extent that He is aware of all that is hidden and secret, and all that is hidden on land and in the sea.

The point of mentioning this is to urge people to remember that Allah is always watching and to do acts of obedience as much as possible; and to warn against doing evil deeds, small or great.

{O my son, establish prayer} prayer is encouraged and singled out for mention because it is the greatest of physical acts of worship **{enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong}** - this requires one to have knowledge of what is right, so that he may enjoin it, and to have knowledge of what is wrong, so that he may forbid it. That without which one cannot enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong is also enjoined, such as kindness and patience. That is stated clearly in the words: **{be patient and steadfast in the face of whatever befalls you} (31: 17)**. He should do what he enjoins others to do and refrain from what he forbids them to do. Thus he will be striving to perfect himself by doing good and refraining from evil, and will be striving to perfect others by enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong.

Because Allah knew that man would inevitably be faced with troubles if he enjoins what is right and forbids what is

wrong, and that doing this is difficult for people, He enjoined them to be patient and steadfast in doing it:

{be patient and steadfast in the face of whatever befalls you; that} which Luqman advised his son to do **{is something that must be adhered to, [as it is enjoined by Allah]}** that is, it is one of the things that must be adhered to and paid attention to, and no one is able to attain that except people of strong resolve.

{Do not turn your face away from people [in contempt]} that is, do not frown at people out of arrogance towards them, looking down on them.

{and do not walk on the earth with insolence} that is, with arrogance, feeling proud because of the blessings that have been bestowed upon you whilst forgetting the Bestower, and being filled with self-admiration.

{Verily Allah does not love anyone who is conceited} in the way he thinks of himself and carries himself and boastful; in his speech.

{Be moderate in your gait} that is, walk humbly and modestly, not in the manner of one who is insolent and arrogant, or in the manner of one who is weak and exhausted.

{and lower your voice} out of good manners towards people and towards Allah

{verily the most hideous of sounds} that is, the ugliest and most abhorrent

{is the voice [braying] of the donkey}. If there was any benefit in raising the voice, the donkey - which is known for being ignoble and stupid - would not have been singled out for mention.

This advice which Luqman gave to his son represents the main points of wisdom and implies those that were not mentioned. Each piece of advice is mentioned with a reason that motivates one to comply with it.

This supports what we have mentioned about the meaning of wisdom, which is that it means knowing the rulings, understanding the reasons behind them, and knowing when and how to implement them.

Luqman enjoined on his son the foundation of religion, namely the affirmation of the oneness of Allah; he forbade him to ascribe partners to Allah and explained why he should avoid doing that. He instructed him to honor his parents, and explained the reason for doing so. He instructed him to give thanks to Allah and to his parents, then he highlighted that the injunction to honor them and comply with their instructions is only applicable so long as they do not enjoin sin, yet he should still not mistreat them or turn against them if they do tell him to commit sin. Rather he should treat them kindly even if he does not obey them when they endeavor to make him ascribe partners to Allah. He instructed him to remember that Allah is always watching, and reminded him to fear the time when he will stand before

Him, for Allah will not leave any deed, small or great, good or bad, but He will bring it.

He forbade him to be arrogant and instructed him to be humble; He forbade him to be insolent, boastful or conceited; He instructed him to show humility in the way he moves and talks, and forbade him to do the opposite of that.

He instructed him to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, to establish prayer and to be steadfast and patient, for by means of prayer and patience, everything is made easy, as Allah says. So it is no wonder that the one who gave these instructions must be a man who was blessed with wisdom and was well known for that. Hence one of the blessings that Allah bestows upon him and upon all His slaves is that He told them the story of his wisdom, so that he might be a good example to them.

**(94) The Prophet has a greater claim over the believers
and is closer to them than their own selves**

قال الله تعالى

النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ

[الأحزاب : ٦]

The Prophet has a greater claim over the believers [and is closer to them] than their own selves, and his wives are their mothers.

[Surah al-Ahzab 33:6]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah tells the believers something by which they may recognize the true status of the Messenger ﷺ and interact with him accordingly.

{The Prophet has a greater claim over the believers [and is closer to them] than their own selves}. The closest of things to any person is his own self, but the Messenger ﷺ is closer to him than his own self, because he showed them sincerity, compassion and kindness that proved him to be the most merciful and kindest of all people. Thus they owe the Messenger of Allah ﷺ more than they owe anyone else, for not the slightest

good reached them and not the slightest harm was warded off from them but it was because of him.

Therefore, it became a must on them, in the event of a conflict between what they or any of the people want and what the Messenger ﷺ wants, that precedence must be given to what the Messenger ﷺ wants, and the word of the Messenger ﷺ should not be contradicted by the view of anyone, no matter who he is. They should be ready to sacrifice themselves, their wealth and their children to protect him, and give precedence to loving him over loving others; they should not speak until he speaks or put themselves forward before him.

The Prophet ﷺ is a father to the believers, as is understood from the recitation of some of his Companions; he takes care of them as a father takes care of his children.

One of the consequences of his being a father to them is that his wives are their mothers; that is, in terms of sanctity, respect and honor, not in terms of it being permissible to be alone with them or regarding them as *mahrums*.

(95) Verily in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example

قال الله تعالى

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ
الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

[الأحزاب : ٢١]

Verily in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example for those who look with hope to Allah and the Last Day, and remember Allah much.

[Surah al-Ahzab 33:21]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{Verily in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example} for he himself was present in the battlefield, and he himself took up a position, ready to fight, for he was the perfect leader and courageous hero. So how can you be so reluctant to join the fight when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself was involved in it? Therefore, you must follow his example in this matter and others.

The scholars of *usool* quote this verse to prove that the Messenger's deeds constitute evidence for *shar'i* rulings and that in principle his *Ummah* is subject to the same rulings as him,

unless there is clear evidence to prove that some rulings are applicable to him alone.

Examples are of **two** types: **(1)** good examples and **(2)** bad examples. The good example is to be found in the Messenger ﷺ, because the one who follows his example will be on the path that leads to the blessings of Allah, which is the straight path.

As for following the example of others in matters that are contrary to his teachings, that is following bad examples, such as the words of the disbelievers when the Messengers called them to follow their example and they said: **{...We found our forefathers following a certain path, and we are following in their footsteps}** (az-Zukhruf 43: 22)

This good example is only followed by those who are guided and enabled to follow it, those who look with hope to Allah and the Last Day, because what they have of faith, fear of Allah, hope for His reward and fear of His punishment motivates them to follow the example of the Messenger ﷺ.

(96) O Prophet, say to your wives: If you seek the life of this world...

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِّأَزْوَاجِكَ إِن كُنْتُمْ تُرِيدْنَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا فَتَعَالَيْنَ أُمَتِّعْكُنَّ وَأُسَرِّحْكُنَّ سَرَاحًا جَمِيلًا (٢٨) وَإِن كُنْتُمْ تُرِيدْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْمُحْسِنَاتِ مِنكُنَّ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا (٢٩)

[الأحزاب : ٢٨-٢٩]

O Prophet, say to your wives: If you seek the life of this world and its splendor, then come, I will give you a gift [as compensation] and let you go in an amicable manner (28) But if you seek Allah and His Messenger, and the final abode, then verily Allah has prepared for those among you who do good an immense reward (29)

[Surah al-Ahzab 33:28-29]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

When the wives of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ began to make demands on him with regard to maintenance and clothing, they asked for something that he was not able to do all the time, but they all persisted in their demands, which caused him some distress, to the extent that he kept away from them for a month.

Allah wanted to make things easier for His Messenger ﷺ and to raise his wives in status, and remove from them anything that could detract from their reward. Therefore, He instructed His Messenger ﷺ to give them the choice, as He said:

{O Prophet, say to your wives: If you seek the life of this world and its splendor} that is, if you have no desire other than that and your happiness is connected to having its splendor, and your anger is connected to that not being available, then I have no need of you if you are like that.

{then come, I will give you a gift [as compensation]} that is, I will give you something of what I possess of worldly goods

{and let you go in an amicable manner} that is, I will separate from you without argument or trading insults; rather I will do so in an easy manner and willingly, before the problem escalates to an inappropriate level.

{But if you seek Allah and His Messenger, and the final abode} that is, if these are your goal and ultimate aim, and if you prefer Allah and His Messenger ﷺ and paradise, and you do not worry about whether you have plenty or little in this world, or if you have ease or hardship, and you are content with whatever the Messenger of Allah ﷺ can give you, and you do not make demands on him and put pressure on him,

{then verily Allah has prepared for those among you who do good an immense reward} - the reward is connected to their being among those who do good, because the promise of reward

is connected to doing good, not to being the wives of the Messenger ﷺ. Simply being his wives is not enough; rather nothing is to any avail without doing good. So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave them the choice, and they all chose Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, and the final abode, and not one of them differed. May Allah be pleased with them all.

(97) Do not speak too softly, lest one in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire.

قال الله تعالى

**يَا نِسَاءَ النَّبِيِّ لَسْتُنَّ كَأَحَدٍ مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ إِنِ اتَّقَيْتُنَّ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ
فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا (٣٢) وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ
وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتِينَ الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ
اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ
وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا (٣٣) وَاذْكُرْنَ مَا يُتْلَى فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ
وَالْحِكْمَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ لَطِيفًا خَبِيرًا (٣٤)**

[الأحزاب : ٣٢-٣٤]

O wives of the Prophet, you are not like other women, provided that you fear Allah. So do not speak too softly, lest one in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire; but speak in an appropriate manner (32) Stay in your homes and do not flaunt your charms as was done during the former [times of] ignorance; establish prayer and give zakah; and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah only wants to keep all that is loathsome away from you, O members of the [Prophet's] household, and to purify you thoroughly (33) And remember what is recited in your homes of the revelations of

Allah and wisdom. Verily Allah is Knower of subtleties, All-Aware (34)

[Surah al-Ahzab 33:32-34]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{O wives of the Prophet} - this is addressed to all of them

{you are not like other women, provided that you fear Allah}; by doing so, you will surpass all other women and no other woman will be able to catch up with you. So strive to perfect your fear of Allah by all possible means and achieve all the goals thereof.

Hence Allah instructed them to avoid all means that could lead to what is prohibited, as He said:

{So do not speak too softly} that is, when addressing men, or, knowing that they can hear you, by making your voice soft or speaking in a gentle manner which may cause **{one in whose heart is a disease}** - namely the disease of desire for fornication - to be moved with desire, for such a person is always ready and watching out for the slightest move that could stir desire, because his heart is not sound. The sound heart has no desire for that which Allah has prohibited and can hardly be moved or stirred to desire even when there is a reason for that, because it is free of sickness.

This is in contrast to the one who is sick at heart, who cannot cope with that which the sound-hearted person can cope

with, and he cannot be patient like him. If there is the slightest reason that calls him to that which is prohibited, he will respond to it and will not refrain from it.

This indicates that the means come under the same rulings as the ends. Speaking softly and gently is basically permissible, but if it is a means that leads to something prohibited, then it is not allowed. Therefore, when addressing men, women should not make their voices soft.

Because Allah forbade women to speak softly, it may be thought that they are instructed to make their voices harsh. In order to ward off this notion, Allah says: **{but speak in an appropriate manner}** that is, one that is not harsh or rough, just as it is not soft and alluring.

Think about how Allah says **{do not speak too softly}**, and He did not say “do not speak softly”, because what is prohibited is soft speech that is alluring to men, in such a manner that anyone who hears it may be moved with desire. This is different from speaking in a gentle manner in which there is no alluring softness; rather it has the quality of being confident and firm when dealing with an opponent. No one would be moved with desire when hearing this. Hence Allah praised His Messenger ﷺ for his gentleness, as He said:

{It is by the mercy of Allah that you deal gently with them...} (Al 'Imran 3: 159)

And He said to Moosa and Haroon:

{Go, both of you, to Pharaoh, for he has indeed transgressed all bounds. But speak to him gently, so that perhaps he may pay heed or fear Allah.} (Ta Ha 20: 43-44)

The fact that Allah says **{lest one in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire}** in conjunction with the command to restrain carnal desires, and praise for men and women who do so, as well as the prohibition on approaching or coming near unlawful sex, indicates that if a person sees such an inclination in himself, and realizes that he is tempted to commit prohibited deeds when he sees or hears the words of someone to whom he is attracted, and finds himself motivated to do that which is forbidden, he should remember that this is a disease. Therefore, he should strive to combat this disease, put an end to evil thoughts that may lead to trouble, strive to overcome this serious malady, and ask Allah to protect him and guide him. This is all included in the command to restrain carnal desires.

{Stay in your homes} that is, remain there because that is safer and more protecting for you **{and do not flaunt your charms as was done during the former [times of] ignorance}** that is, do not go out often, wearing adornment or perfume, as was the custom among the people of the former times of ignorance, who had no knowledge or religious commitment. All of this is aimed at warding off evil and that which leads to it.

**(98) Allah has prepared forgiveness and an immense
reward for them**

قال الله تعالى

**إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَنَاتِينَ
وَالْقَنَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّابِرَاتِ
وَالْخَاشِعِينَ وَالْخَاشِعَاتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّائِمِينَ
وَالصَّائِمَاتِ وَالْحَافِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا**

[الأحزاب : ٣٥]

**For Muslim men and Muslim women, believing men and
believing women, obedient men and obedient women,
truthful men and truthful women, patient men and patient
women, humble men and humble women, charitable men and
charitable women, men who fast and women who fast, men
who restrain their carnal desires and women who do likewise,
men who remember Allah much and women who do likewise
- for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and an immense
reward.**

[Surah al-Ahzab 33:35]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Having mentioned the reward of the wives of the Messenger ﷺ, and their punishment if they do not comply, and stating that they are not like other women, Allah now speaks of other women. Because the rulings on men and women are the same, Allah says:

{For Muslim men and Muslim women} that is, with regard to visible actions and rulings, if they comply with them

{believing men and believing women} this refers to inward actions, namely beliefs and deeds of the heart

{obedient men and obedient women} who are obedient to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ

{truthful men and truthful women} who are true in their words and deeds

{patient men and patient women} who are patient in bearing hardship and calamity

{humble men and humble women} who are humble in all circumstances, especially in worship, and especially in prayer

{charitable men and charitable women} who give in charity, both obligatory and voluntary

{men who fast and women who fast} which includes both obligatory and supererogatory fasts

{men who restrain their carnal desires and women who do likewise}, refraining from *zina* (unlawful sex) and that which leads to it

{men who remember Allah much and women who do likewise} that is, they remember Him at most times, especially at times when specific *dhikr* is to be recited, such as in the morning and afternoon, and following the obligatory prayers.

{for them} that is, for these people who are described in these glowing terms as possessing these noble characteristics, which include beliefs, deeds of the heart, physical deeds, spoken words, and doing acts that may benefit oneself or others, as well as doing good deeds and refraining from evil deeds, for the one who does these things has established the religion in the fullest sense, both outwardly and inwardly, and has attained Islam, *eeman* (faith) and *ihsan*.

{Allah has prepared forgiveness} - Allah will reward them for their deeds with forgiveness of their sins, because good deeds erase bad deeds

{and an immense reward} that cannot be estimated except by the One Who gives it, of that which no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever crossed the mind of man. We ask Allah to make us among them.

(99) O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is appropriate.

قال الله تعالى

**يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا (٧٠) يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ
أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا
عَظِيمًا (٧١)**

[الأحزاب : ٧٠-٧١]

**O you who believe, fear Allah and say what is appropriate (70)
for then He will guide you to do righteous deeds and forgive
you your sins. Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger will
surely achieve a great triumph (71)**

[Surah al-Ahzab 33:70-71]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah instructs the believers to fear Him in all situations, in private and in public, and He specifically mentions and encourages saying what is appropriate. That means saying the right thing and that which is as close as possible to that which is right and proper when one is not certain, such as reciting Qur'an or *dhikr*, or enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, learning and teaching knowledge, and being very keen to find the correct understanding of various issues, following every

path and taking all measures that will help one to achieve that. Part of saying what is appropriate is speaking in a kind and gentle manner when addressing people, being sincere and advising people to do that which is more appropriate and correct.

Then Allah tells us what will result from fearing Him and saying what is appropriate:

{for then He will guide you to do righteous deeds} that is, that will be the reason for your deeds becoming righteous and the way for them to be accepted, because by means of fearing Allah, deeds become acceptable. This is like the verse in which Allah says: **{...Verily, Allah only accepts from those who fear Him.} (al-Ma'idah 5: 27)**

Therefore, a person will be guided thereby to do righteous deeds, and Allah will also make his deeds good, by protecting them from that which could spoil them, and by granting and multiplying the reward for them. By the same token, not fearing Him properly and not saying what is appropriate is a cause of deeds becoming corrupted and not accepted, and it will not lead to the same results.

{and} moreover, He will **{forgive you your sins}** that are the cause of doom. So fearing Allah will cause all of one's affairs to be rectified and become sound, and will ward off all kinds of harm. Hence Allah says: **{Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger will surely achieve a great triumph}.**

**(100) You are in need of Allah, whereas Allah is
Self-Sufficient.**

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ

[فاطر : ١٥]

**O people, it is you who are in need of Allah, whereas Allah is
Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise.**

[Surah Fatir 35:15]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah addresses all people and tells them about their real situation and that they are in need of Allah in all ways.

They are in need of His bringing them into existence; were it not for His bringing them into existence, they would not exist.

They are in need of His giving them physical strength, faculties and senses; were it not for His giving them these things, they would not be able to do any deeds.

They are in need of His providing them with nourishment, provision and blessings, both visible and hidden; were it not for His bestowing His bounty and kindness, and making things easy for them, they would not have attained any provisions or blessings.

They are in need of His warding off harm from them, averting troubles and relieving them of stress and hardship; were it not for His warding off these things from them, relieving them of distress and removing hardship from them, their hardships and calamities would have been ongoing.

They are in need of His taking care of them in all ways. They need to turn to Him, love Him, worship Him and devote their worship to Him alone. If He does not help them and guide them to do that, they will be doomed and they will become corrupt spiritually, psychologically and in all their affairs.

They are in need of His teaching them what they do not know and guiding them to that which is in their best interests. Were it not for His teaching them, they would not have learned; were it not for His guiding them, their situation would not have been rectified. They are inherently in need of Him in all ways, whether they realize some of those ways or not.

But the one among them who is guided is the one who constantly realizes and is aware of his need for Allah in all his religious and worldly affairs, and he beseeches Him and asks Him not to leave him to his own devices for even the blink of an eye, and asks Him to help him in all his affairs, bearing this in mind at all times. Such a one is more deserving of complete help from his Lord and God, Who is more compassionate towards him than a mother towards her child.

{whereas Allah is Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise} that is, He is the One Who is completely self-sufficient in all ways, so He has no need of what His creation needs. That is because of the perfect nature of His attributes, all of which are attributes of perfection and majesty.

One aspect of His being self-sufficient is that He meets all the needs of creation in this world and the hereafter.

{Worthy of all praise} in His essence, in His names because they are most beautiful, in His attributes because they are most sublime, and in His deeds because they are based on generosity, kindness, justice, wisdom and mercy, and He is praiseworthy in His commands and prohibitions. So He is praiseworthy for what He is and what He does, and He is praiseworthy for being self-sufficient.

(101) Only those who have knowledge truly fear Allah

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ

[فاطر : ٢٨]

Among His slaves, only those who have knowledge truly fear Allah. Verily Allah is Almighty, Oft-Forgiving.

[Surah Fatir 35:28]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{Among His slaves, only those who have knowledge truly fear Allah}. The more a person knows about Allah, the more he will fear Him, and this fear of Allah will make him refrain from sin and prepare to meet the One Whom he fears. This is indicative of the virtue of knowledge, because it prompts one to fear Allah, and those who fear Him are the ones who will be honored by Him, as He says elsewhere: **{...Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. That is for those who fear their Lord}** (al-Bayyinah 98: 8)

**(102) The inhabitants of paradise will be busy in their
rejoicing on that day**

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ الْيَوْمَ فِي شُغْلٍ فَكِهِونَ (٥٥) هُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُمْ فِي
ظِلِّ عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ مُتَكِونَ (٥٦) لَهُمْ فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَلَهُمْ مَا يَدْعُونَ
(٥٧) سَلَامٌ قَوْلًا مِّن رَّبِّ رَحِيمٍ (٥٨)

[يس : ٥٥-٥٨]

Verily the inhabitants of paradise will, on that day, be busy in
their rejoicing (55) they and their spouses reclining on couches
in the shade (56) There they will have fruit and all that they
ask for (57) Salam (peace be on you) - a word [of salutation]
from a Lord Most Merciful (58)

[Surah Ya-Seen 36:55-58]

◆ **Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:**

Having stated that each person will be requited only for
what he did, Allah now refers to the requital of both groups,
starting with the reward of the people of paradise. He tells us
that on that day, they will **{be busy in their rejoicing}** that is,
their souls will be rejoicing, having all that one may desire, that
may delight the eye, and all that anyone could wish for. That will
include the joy of being with beautiful spouses, as Allah says:

{and their spouses} of the *hoor al-‘een*, **{on couches in the shade}** that is, they will be reclining on beautiful adorned couches, wearing beautiful adorned garments, in complete comfort, relaxed and secure, enjoying perfect pleasure.

{There they will have fruit} in abundance, all types of delicious fruits, grapes, figs, pomegranates and others

{and all that they ask for} that is, whatever they request and wish for, they will get.

They will also have **{Salam (peace be upon you) - a word [of salutation]}** coming to them **{from a Lord Most Merciful}**. This refers to the Lord addressing the people of paradise and greeting them. If the Most Merciful Lord gives them a salutation of peace, they will attain perfect peace and well-being in all aspects, and they will receive this salutation, which is such that no salutation is more sublime than it and there is no blessing like it. So what do you think of a salutation from the King of Kings, the Almighty Lord, the Most Kind, the Most Merciful, to the people of His paradise, who have attained His pleasure and He will never be angry with them?

Were it not that Allah has decreed that they will never die, their hearts might be displaced out of joy, pleasure and happiness. We hope that our Lord will not deprive us of that bliss, and that He will grant us the joy of gazing upon His noble Countenance.

**(103) With them will be chaste women with big
beautiful eyes who restrain their glances**

قال الله تعالى

إِلَّا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الْمُخْلَصِينَ (٤٠) أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ رِزْقٌ مَّعْلُومٌ (٤١) فَوَكِهِ
وَهُمْ مُكْرَمُونَ (٤٢) فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ (٤٣) عَلَى سُرُرٍ مُتَقَابِلِينَ (٤٤)
يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِكَأْسٍ مِّنْ مَّعِينٍ (٤٥) بَيضَاءَ لَذَّةٍ لِلشَّارِبِينَ (٤٦) لَا فِيهَا
غَوْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ عَنْهَا يُنْزَفُونَ (٤٧) وَعِنْدَهُمْ قَصِيرَاتُ الْظَّرْفِ عِينٌ (٤٨)
كَأَنَّهُنَّ بَيْضٌ مَّكْنُونٌ (٤٩)

[الصافات : ٤٠-٤٩]

However, for the chosen [and sincere] slaves of Allah (40) there will be provisions that are known [for their beauty and delicious taste] (41) fruits of various kinds; and they will be honored (42) in gardens of delight (43) seated on couches facing one another (44) A cup will be passed around among them with wine from a flowing spring (45) white and delicious to those who drink it (46) It will not cause any harm, nor will they be intoxicated by it (47) And with them will be chaste women with big beautiful eyes who restrain their glances (48) as if they are eggs carefully guarded (49)

[Surah as-Saafaat 37:40-49]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{And with them will be chaste women with big beautiful eyes who restrain their glances} that is, with the people of paradise, with big beautiful eyes, reaching the pinnacle of beauty and restraining their glances.

What is meant is either that this beautiful and chaste woman restrains her glance and looks only at her husband, because of her chastity, and she does not look beyond him to anyone else, and because of the perfection and beauty of her husband, which is such that she does not want anyone else in paradise but him; or it may be the phrase translated as **{restrain their glances}** means that they are so beautiful that the husband looks only at his spouse, and restrains his glance which indicates that his thoughts and love are only for her. Both meanings are possible and both are sound.

All of this is indicative of the beauty of both men and women in paradise and their love for one another, which is such that no one would look at anyone else and they will all be extremely chaste; there will be no envy or resentment or grudges, because of the absence of the causes thereof.

{with big beautiful eyes} this refers to the beauty of the eye and its lovely shape

{as if they} namely the *hoor al-'een* **{are eggs carefully guarded}** that is, covered. That is because of their beauty and purity, and indicates that their colors are the most beautiful of

colors and the most delightful to behold, with no blemishes or dark patches.

(104) We have sent down to you the Book with the truth, so worship Allah with sincere devotion.

قال الله تعالى

**تَنْزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ (١) إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ
بِالْحَقِّ فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ (٢)**

[الزمر : ١-٢]

The revelation of the Book is from Allah, the Almighty, the Most Wise (1) Verily We have sent down to you [O Muhammad] the Book with the truth, so worship Allah, with sincere devotion to Him alone (2)

[Surah az-Zumar 39:1-2]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah tells us of the greatness of the Qur'an and the majesty of the One Who spoke it and from Whom it came down. For it came down from Allah, the Almighty, the Most Wise, the One Who is the object of worship and love for humankind. That is because of His greatness and perfection, and His might by which He subjugates all creatures, and everything surrenders to Him; all wisdom is in His creation and His command.

So the Qur'an has come down from One Who is like this; speech is an attribute of the speaker, and the attribute is

connected to the one who possesses that attribute. Therefore, just as Allah is perfect in all aspects, and there is none like unto Him, so too His word is perfect in all aspects, and there is nothing like it. This alone is sufficient to describe the Qur'an and highlight its sublime nature.

But - moreover - in order to highlight the level of perfection of the Qur'an, Allah mentions the one to whom it was revealed, namely Muhammad ﷺ, who is the noblest of creation. Thus it is known that it is the noblest of books, and what it contains is the truth. It was sent down with the truth, concerning which there is no doubt, to bring humankind forth from the depths of darkness to the light. It was sent down containing the truth with regard to what it tells of the stories of the past and the future, and what it prescribes of just rulings. Everything it mentions is the greatest type of truth in all respects, and there is nothing beyond the truth except misguidance.

As the Qur'an was sent down from the true God, containing truth to guide humankind, to the best of humankind, the blessing of its sending is immense, and thanks must be given for that. That is to be done by devoting worship to Allah alone. Therefore, He says: **{so worship Allah, with sincere devotion to Him alone}** that is, devote to Allah alone all your worship, complying outwardly and inwardly with His commands. This refers to Islam, faith and *ihsan*, which means focusing one's devotion on Allah alone, seeking thereby His pleasure and not focusing on anything else.

(105) Are they equal, those who know and those who do not know?

قال الله تعالى

أَمْ مَنْ هُوَ قَنِتٌ ءَانَاءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَائِمًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُوا رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ قُلْ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ

[الزمر : ٩]

[Can such a disbeliever, who is destined for hell, be better than] one who is constant in worship, spending the night prostrating and standing [in prayer], fearful of the hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord? Say: Are they equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is only people of understanding who will pay heed.

[Surah az-Zumar 39:9]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This is a contrast between the one who strives in worship of Allah and one who does not, between one who has knowledge and one who is ignorant. This is something that is well established in people's minds, and it is known for certain that they are different. The one who turns away from obeying his Lord and follows his own whims and desires is not like one who

is constant in worship and obeys Allah by doing the best act of worship, namely prayer, at the best of times, which is during the night. Allah describes him as doing a great deal of the best of deeds, then He describes him as having fear and hope. The reason for his fear is punishment in the hereafter for what he did of sins, and the reason for his hope is the mercy of Allah. Thus Allah describes him in terms of both inward and outward acts of obedience.

{Say: Are they equal, those who know} their Lord and know what He has prescribed of religious duties, what He has prescribed of requital, and what He has of reasons and wisdom behind what He prescribes

{and those who do not know} any of that? The two groups are not equal, just as night and day, light and darkness, water and fire are not equal.

{It is only people of understanding} that is, people of clear and smart minds **{who will pay heed}** when they are reminded, for they are the ones who give precedence to that which is superior over that which is inferior. Therefore, they give precedence to knowledge over ignorance, obedience to Allah over disobedience towards Him, because they have minds with which they can see the consequences of their actions. This is in contrast to those who have no understanding or reason, and therefore take their whims and desires as their god.

**(106) Those who are patient will be rewarded
abundantly without measure**

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّمَا يُوفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

[الزمر : ١٠]

**Verily those who are patient and steadfast will be rewarded
abundantly, without measure.**

[Surah az-Zumar 39:10]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{Verily those who are patient and steadfast will be rewarded abundantly, without measure} this is general in meaning and applies to all types of patience: patience in accepting the decree of Allah, even if it is painful, so they do not complain about it; patience in refraining from sin and not committing it; and patience in obeying Allah, so that they do it. Allah has promised those who are patient their reward without measure, that is, without limit or counting. That is only because of the virtue and high status of patience before Allah, for it helps in all things.

(107) O my slaves who have transgressed against themselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah.

قال الله تعالى

قُلْ يَاعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ (٥٣) وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُوا لَهُ ۖ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ (٥٤)

[الزمر : ٥٣-٥٤]

Say [Allah says]: O My slaves who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning greatly], do not despair of the mercy of Allah, for verily Allah forgives all sins. Verily it is He Who is the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful (53) Turn to your Lord [in repentance] and submit to Him before the punishment comes upon you, for then you will not be helped (54)

[Surah az-Zumar 39:53-54]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah tells His slaves who have transgressed against themselves (by sinning greatly) of His immense generosity, and He urges them to turn to Him before they are not able to do so.

{Say} O Messenger ﷺ, and those who follow him in calling people to the religion of Allah, and tell people that their Lord says:

{O My slaves who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning greatly]} by following what their own selves call them to and striving in doing that which angers the Knower of the unseen

{do not despair of the mercy of Allah} that is, do not give up hope thereof, lest your actions lead you to doom and you say: Our sins are so many and our faults have accumulated, and we have no way to rid ourselves of them or relieve ourselves of them, then as a result of that you persist in sinning and accumulating sin until it brings upon you the wrath of the Most Gracious. Rather you should recognize your Lord by His names that are indicative of His generosity and kindness, and understand that He **{forgives all sins}** including the ascription of partners to Him, murder, fornication, *riba* (usury), wrongdoing and other sins, major and minor

{Verily it is He Who is the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful} that is, forgiveness and mercy are His attributes, and these two attributes are essential and constant; He is always thus and His mercy is continually manifested throughout the universe. His Hands are constantly bestowing bounties throughout the night and day, and He continually bestows blessings and favors upon His slaves, secretly and openly. Giving is dearer to Him than withholding, and divine mercy takes precedence over divine wrath and prevails over it. But there are means of attaining His forgiveness and mercy, and if a person does not take these prescribed measures, then he will have closed to himself the

door of mercy and forgiveness. The greatest of these means - in fact the only means - is turning to Allah alone in sincere repentance, calling upon Him, beseeching Him, showing devotion to Him and worshipping Him. So strive hard to take this important measure and follow this great path.

Hence Allah enjoins us to turn to Him and to hasten to do so: **{Turn to your Lord}** with all your heart

{and submit to Him} in your physical actions. When turning to Allah is mentioned on its own, it includes physical actions; when it is mentioned in conjunction with submission, as is the case here, then the meaning is as we have mentioned.

The words **{Turn to your Lord [in repentance] and submit to Him}** are indicative of sincerity, because without sincerity, deeds - whether outward or inward - are of no benefit whatsoever.

{before the punishment comes upon you} and cannot be warded off **{for then you will not be helped}**.

(108) Call upon Me; I will answer your prayer.

قال الله تعالى

**وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي
سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ**

[غافر: ٦٠]

**Your Lord says: Call upon Me; I will answer your prayer. Verily
those who are too arrogant to worship Me will enter hell in
humiliation.**

[Surah Ghafir 40:60]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

By His kindness towards His slaves and the immense blessings He bestows upon them, Allah called them to that which is in their best interests in both spiritual and worldly terms, and He instructed them to call upon Him, meaning both the supplication of worship and the supplication of asking for what they need. He promised to respond to them, and He warned them against being too arrogant to do that.

{Verily those who are too arrogant to worship Me will enter hell in humiliation} that is, they will be humiliated and despised, suffering a combination of punishment and humiliation, as a requital for their arrogance.

**(109) Verily those who say: Our Lord is Allah, then
remain steadfast.**

قال الله تعالى

**إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَمُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا
وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ (٣٠) نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَائُكُمْ فِي
الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهُ أَنْفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا
تَدْعُونَ (٣١) نُزِّلَا مِنْ غَفُورٍ رَحِيمٍ (٣٢)**

[فصلت : ٣٠-٣٢]

**Verily those who say: Our Lord is Allah, then remain steadfast,
to them the angels will come down [at the time of death,
saying]: Fear not, nor grieve; but receive the glad tidings of
paradise which you were promised (30) We have been your
close friends in the life of this world and [will remain so] in the
hereafter. There you will have all that your souls desire and
there you will have all that you ask for (31) a recompense
from One Who is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful (32)**

[Surah Fussilat 41:30-32]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah speaks of His close friends, and implicitly offers encouragement and urges us to follow their example:

{Verily those who say: Our Lord is Allah, then remain steadfast} that is, they acknowledge, speak out loud and are content with Allah as their Lord and submit to His command, then they remain steadfast in following the straight path in terms of knowledge and action. For them there are glad tidings in this world and in the hereafter.

{to them the angels will come down [at the time of death]} that is, the noble angels repeatedly come down to them, giving them glad tidings at the time of death

{[saying]: Fear not} what lies ahead of you

{nor grieve} for what is past. So they will tell them that there is nothing to worry about in the past or in the future.

{but receive the glad tidings of paradise which you were promised} for it is due to you and is confirmed, and the promise of Allah is bound to be fulfilled.

They will also say to them, by way of reassuring them and giving them glad tidings: **{We have been your close friends in the life of this world and [will remain so] in the hereafter}**. They urge them to do good in this world, making it fair-seeming to them, and warn them against doing evil deeds, making them abhorrent in their hearts; and they pray to Allah for them, and reassure them at times of calamity and fear, especially at the time of death with its hardships, in the grave with its darkness, on the Day of Resurrection with its horrors, and on the *sirat* (bridge over hell). And in paradise they will congratulate them

on having attained the honor of their Lord, and they will enter unto them from every gate (saying):

{Peace be upon you because you patiently persevered. How excellent is the ultimate end} (ar-Ra'd 13: 24)

They will also say to them:

{There} in paradise **{you will have all that your souls desire}** for it has been prepared and made ready for you, **{and there you will have all that you ask for}** that is, all that you request of anything that you could want or ask for of all kinds of delights and desires, such as no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever crossed the mind of man.

{a recompense from One Who is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful} this abundant reward and eternal bliss is a recompense and a gift **{from One Who is Oft-Forgiving}** and has forgiven you your sins **{Most Merciful}** as He has enabled you to do good deeds, then accepted them from you. So His forgiveness has removed from you what you feared, and by His mercy He has helped you to attain what you wanted.

(110) Who is better in speech than one who calls people to Allah

قال الله تعالى

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

[فصلت : ٣٣]

Who is better in speech than one who calls people to Allah, does righteous deeds, and says: Verily I am one of those who submit to Allah [in Islam]?

[Surah Fussilat 41:33]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This appears in the form of a question, but what is meant is confirmation that no one is better in speech - that is, in words, manners and attitude, **{than one who calls people to Allah}** by teaching the ignorant and exhorting those who are heedless and turn away; debating with the followers of falsehood by enjoining worship of Allah in all ways and urging people to worship Him, making that fair-seeming by all possible means; telling people to stay away from that which Allah has forbidden and making it appear abhorrent by any means that will make people refrain, especially calling people to the religion of Islam, presenting it in

the best of terms, debating with its enemies in ways that are best, speaking out against its opposite, namely disbelief and polytheism, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong.

Part of calling people to Allah is endearing Him to His slaves by mentioning in detail His blessings, vast generosity and perfect mercy, and mentioning His perfect and majestic attributes.

Another aspect of calling people to Allah is encouraging people to acquire knowledge and learn guidance from the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger ﷺ and urging them to do that by all possible means, which includes encouraging them to attain noble characteristics, treating people kindly, responding to those who behave offensively with kindness, and enjoining upholding of ties of kinship and honoring parents.

It also includes exhorting people on special occasions, at special events and times of calamity, in a manner that is appropriate to the situation. And there are innumerable other ways of calling people to Allah, which includes calling them to all that is good and warning against all that is evil.

{does righteous deeds} that is, in addition to calling people to Allah, he himself hastens to obey the command of Allah, by doing righteous deeds that are pleasing to his Lord

{and say: Verily I am one of those who submit to Allah [in Islam]} that is, those who submit to His command and follow His path. Reaching a high level in this regard means reaching the level of the strong and true in faith who strive to perfect

themselves and perfect others, and who are the rightful heirs of the Messengers. By the same token, among the worst of people in speech are those who call people to misguidance and follow its path.

Between these two levels, the one who attains the highest level and the one who sinks to the lowest levels, are many other levels that are known to Allah, all of which are occupied by people: **{For all there will be ranks according to their deeds, for your Lord is not unaware of what they do.} (al-An'am 6: 132)**

(111) Repel evil with that which is good

قال الله تعالى

وَلَا تَسْتَوِی الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ۚ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي
بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ (٣٤) وَمَا يُلَقِّهَآ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا
وَمَا يُلَقِّهَآ إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ (٣٥)

[فصلت : ٣٤-٣٥]

Good deeds and evil deeds are not equal. Repel evil with that which is good, whereupon he between whom and you there was ill feeling will become like a close friend (34) But none can attain that except those who are patient, and none can attain it except one who is blessed with a great share of good and righteousness (35)

[Surah Fussilat 41:34-35]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{Good deeds and evil deeds are not equal} that is, doing good deeds and acts of obedience for the sake of Allah is not the same as doing evil deeds and acts of disobedience that incur His wrath and do not please Him. Kindness towards people is not the same as mistreatment of them, whether in essence, description or requital. **{Is the reward of goodness anything but goodness}** (ar-Rahman 55: 60)

Then Allah enjoins a specific type of kindness, which may have a great impact. It is being kind to one who mistreats you, as He says: **{Repel evil with that which is good}** that is, if anyone mistreats you in word or deed, especially one who has great rights over you, such as relatives, friends and the like, then respond with kindness towards him. If he cuts you off, then uphold ties with him. If he wrongs you, then forgive him. If he speaks ill of you, in your absence or in your presence, then do not respond in kind; rather forgive him and speak gently to him. If he forsakes you and does not speak to you, then speak nicely to him and be the first to greet him with *salam*. If you respond to mistreatment with kindness, you will achieve much good.

{whereupon he between whom and you there was ill feeling will become like a close friend} that is, like one of your nearest and dearest.

{But none can attain that} that is, no one is enabled to attain this good characteristic

{except those who are patient} and make themselves bear with patience that which they dislike, and force themselves to do that which Allah loves. For people are naturally inclined to respond to mistreatment in like manner, and not to forgive it, let alone react with kindness.

But if a person makes himself be patient and obeys the command of his Lord, and is aware of the immense reward that this attitude brings, and understands that responding in kind to

the one who mistreats him will not benefit him in the slightest and will only make the enmity worse, and that treating him kindly will not detract from his status, for whoever humbles himself for the sake of Allah, Allah will raise him in status, then it will become easy for him and he will do that with pleasure and find delight in it.

{and none can attain it except one who is blessed with a great share of good and righteousness} because it is one of the characteristics of the elite among humankind, by means of which a person attains high status in this world and the hereafter; it is one of the greatest of good characteristics.

**(112) There is nothing like Him, and He is the All-
Hearing, All-Seeing.**

قال الله تعالى

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

[الشورى : ١١]

**There is nothing like Him, and He is the All- Hearing, All-
Seeing.**

[Surah ash-Shuraa 42:11]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

{There is nothing like Him} that is, nothing of His creation resembles Him and nothing can match Him, whether in His essence, His names, His attributes or His deeds, because all of His names are beautiful, all His attributes are attributes of perfection and might, and by means of His deeds He brought into being mighty creations, with no partner. So there is nothing like Him, because He is unique and He alone is perfect in all aspects.

{and He is the All-Hearing} Who hears all voices, in all languages, expressing all kinds of needs

{All-Seeing} Who sees the movement of a black ant in a dark night on a solid rock, and He sees nourishment flowing

through the veins of tiny creatures and he sees the sap flowing in the branches of the trees.

This and similar verses offer evidence for the views of *Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah* who affirm the divine attributes and deny that His attributes in any way resemble those of created beings. It offers a refutation of those who liken the divine attributes to those of created beings, in the words **{There is nothing like Him}**; and it offers a refutation of those who deny the divine attributes (by interpreting them in a manner that differs from the apparent meaning), in the words **{and He is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing}**.

(113) Whoever forgives and reconciles, his reward is with Allah.

قال الله تعالى

وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا ۚ فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ

[الشورى : ٤٠]

Harm [or offence] may be requited by the like thereof, but whoever forgives and reconciles, his reward is with Allah; verily He does not love the wrongdoers.

[Surah ash-Shuraa 42:40]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah mentions the various levels of settling scores, of which there are **three**: **(1)** justice, **(2)** charitable forgiveness, and **(3)** injustice.

Justice means requiting an offence with a similar action, no more and no less. So it is a life for a life, and any injury may be requited with a similar injury, and damage to property is to be compensated by replacing it with something similar.

Charitable forgiveness means pardoning and reconciling with the person who did wrong. Hence Allah says: **{but whoever forgives and reconciles, his reward is with Allah}** - Allah will

reward him greatly and abundantly. But if the offender does not deserve to be forgiven and there is a *shar'i* interest to be served by punishing him, then in that case he is not enjoined to forgive him. Stating that the reward of the one who forgives is with Allah motivates him to forgive and to treat others as he wants Allah to treat him. Just as he wants Allah to forgive him, let him forgive others, and just as he wants Allah to pardon him, let him pardon others, for the requital matches the deed.

As for injustice, it is mentioned in the words **{verily He does not love the wrongdoers}** who initiate offence against others, or retaliate with a greater offence; the additional element is wrongdoing or injustice.

(114) If you help Allah's cause, He will help you.

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تَنصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ

[محمد : ٧]

**O you who believe, if you help Allah's cause, He will help you
and steady your footsteps.**

[Surah Muhammad 47:7]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

This is a command from Allah to the believers, instructing them to support His cause by adhering to His religion, calling others to Him, striving against His enemies, seeking thereby the pleasure of Allah. If they do that, Allah will help them and steady their footsteps. In other words, He will instill in their hearts patience, reassurance and steadfastness, He will give them physical endurance and help them against their enemies.

This is a promise from One Who is generous and true in His promise, that whoever supports His cause in word and deed, his Lord will support him and grant him the means of victory, such as steadfastness and the like.

**(115) Know that there is no god worthy of worship
except Allah**

قال الله تعالى

**فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوَاكُمْ**

[محمد : ١٩]

Know, then, that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah, and ask forgiveness for your sins and for [the sins of believing men and women, for Allah knows your movements [during the day] and your places of rest [at night].

[Surah Muhammad 47:19]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

With regard to knowledge, it is essential to affirm it in the heart and understand properly what is required of knowledge, and the perfection thereof is to act in accordance with it.

This knowledge that Allah enjoins - namely knowledge of the oneness of Allah - is an individual obligation upon every human, and is not waived for anyone, no matter who he is. Rather each individual is obliged to know that, and the way to know that there is no god but He is by doing the following:

- 1.** The first and greatest way is reflecting upon His names and attributes, and His actions that highlight His perfection, greatness and majesty. That compels one to strive one's utmost in devotion to Him and in worshipping the Lord Who possesses perfect names and attributes and to Whom belong all praise, glory, majesty and beauty.
- 2.** Knowing that He is the only Creator and controller. Thus one may know that He is the only One Who is deserving of devotion.
- 3.** Knowing that He alone bestows blessings both visible and hidden, spiritual and worldly. That makes one's heart be attached to Him, love Him and be devoted to Him alone, with no partner or associate.
- 4.** What we see and hear of the great reward for His close friends who affirm His oneness, of divine support and blessings in this world; and the punishment for His enemies who associate others with Him. This makes one realise that He alone is deserving of all worship.
- 5.** Understanding the nature of the idols and rivals that are worshipped alongside Allah and taken as gods, for they are helpless in all aspects, inherently needy and have no power to benefit or harm themselves or their worshippers, or to cause death, give life or resurrect. They do not support those who worship them, and they do not benefit them in the slightest by bringing good or warding off evil. Knowing that leads to knowing

that there is no god but Allah, and that all gods besides Him are false.

6. The Books of Allah are all agreed on that and they all stated it.

7. The elite of creation, who are the most perfect of people in attitude, mature thinking, wisdom, sound judgement and knowledge - namely the Messengers, Prophets and devout scholars - have testified that Allah is one.

8. Allah has established proofs in the universe and in people themselves that offer the greatest proof of His oneness and point towards that fact, because of what He has instilled in them of precise creation and what they reflect of brilliant wisdom and amazing design.

These are the ways through which Allah calls people to the message of *la ilaha illa Allah*, which He highlights repeatedly in His Book. When a person ponders some of them, he will inevitably develop certain faith and knowledge of that. So how about if he studies all of them, and they all point to His oneness and agree on that? The proofs of divine oneness come from all directions, then faith and knowledge of that become deeply rooted in the heart, so that they are like firm mountains that cannot be shaken by doubts or illusions, and they only increase and grow the more one comes across false ideas and specious arguments. Moreover, there is the greatest evidence and the most important matter - which is pondering this mighty Qur'an and reflecting on its verses - because it is the main gateway to

learning about divine oneness, and through it one may learn what it says in detail and in general terms, that one cannot learn from any other source.

{and ask forgiveness for your sins} that is, ask Allah for forgiveness for your sins, by taking measures that lead to forgiveness, such as repentance, praying for forgiveness, doing good deeds that erase sin, refraining from sin and forgiving others for any wrongs they have done to you.

{and} seek forgiveness also **{for [the sins of] believing men and women}** for they - because of their faith - have rights over every Muslim man and woman.

One of those rights is that they should pray for them and seek forgiveness for their sins. If it is the case that the Prophet ﷺ is instructed to pray for them, which means asking for their sins to be removed and for them to be protected from the punishment thereof, it is implied that he is to show sincerity towards them, love good for them as he loves it for himself, hate evil for them as he hates it for himself, enjoin them to do that which is good for them and forbid them to do that which is harmful to them, overlook their shortcomings and faults, and be keen that they should be united and in harmony, and that all grudges between them should be removed that could lead to enmity and division that would increase them in sin.

{for Allah knows your movements [during the day]} and your comings and goings

{and your places of rest [at night]} where you settle, for He knows all about you and your movements, and He will requite you for that in full.

(116) Will they not then ponder on the Qur'an, or are there locks on their hearts?

قال الله تعالى

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا

[محمد : ٢٤]

Will they not then ponder on the Qur'an, or are there locks on their hearts?

[Surah Muhammad 47:24]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

That is, why do these people who turn away not ponder the Book of Allah and reflect upon it properly, for if they did that, it would guide them to all that is good and warn them against all that is evil, and it would fill their hearts with faith and certainty, enable them to attain sublime goals and great reward, and explain to them the path that leads to Allah and to His paradise. It would show them what would help them to attain that and what would hinder them from it, and it would highlight the path that leads to punishment and what to beware of. It would tell them about their Lord, His names and attributes, and His kindness; it would make them long for the great reward, and would alert them to the dire punishment.

{or are there locks on their hearts?} That is, are their hearts closed on all the evil that they contain, so that nothing good can enter them? This is how they really are.

(117) Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah

قال الله تعالى

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ
تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي
وُجُوهِهِمْ مِّنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي
الْإِنْجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْئَهُ فَفَازَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ سُوقِهِ
يُعِجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

[الفتح : ٢٩]

Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are firm and unyielding towards the disbelievers, compassionate towards one another. You see them bowing and prostrating [in prayer], seeking the grace and pleasure of Allah. Their mark is on their faces from the effects of prostration. Such is their description in the Torah, and their likeness in the Gospel is that of a seed which sends forth its shoot, then makes it strong; then it grows thick and stands straight on its stem, delighting the sowers - so that He may infuriate the disbelievers through them. Allah has promised those among them who believe and do righteous deeds forgiveness and an immense reward.

[Surah al-Fath 48:29]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah tells us about His Messenger ﷺ and his Companions, both *Muhajireen* and *Ansar*, describing them with the most perfect attributes and in the most sublime situation (namely bowing and prostrating).

And He tells us that they are **{firm and unyielding towards the disbelievers}** that is, they are serious and strive hard in opposing them, putting their utmost effort into achieving that. Hence the disbelievers saw nothing of them except harshness and toughness, therefore their enemies submitted and yielded to them, and the Muslims subdued them.

{compassionate towards one another} that is, loving one another, showing mercy and kindness to one another, like a single body; each of them loves for his brother what he loves for himself. This is how they treat one another.

As for their interactions with their Creator, **{You see them bowing and prostrating [in prayer]}** that is, their main characteristic is that they pray a great deal, and the most important part of the prayer is bowing and prostration.

{seeking} by means of this act of worship **{the grace and pleasure of Allah}** that is, this is their aim, to attain the pleasure of their Lord and His reward.

{Their mark is on their faces from the effects of prostration} that is, the act of worship - as a result of their doing

it a great deal and doing it well - has left its mark on their faces, which shine brightly. Just as the prayer illuminated their hearts, it has also illuminated their faces.

{Such} that is, what is described here **{is their description in the Torah}** that is, this description of them that is given by Allah is also mentioned in the Torah.

As for their likeness in the Gospel, they are described in a different way: in their perfection and cooperation, they are like **{a seed which sends forth its shoot, then makes it strong; then it grows thick and stands straight on its stem, delighting the sowers}** with its perfection, upright growth, beauty and reaching maturity.

The Companions are like such plants in that they benefit people and people need them. Strength of faith and righteous deeds are like the strong roots and stem of the plant.

The fact that the minor Companions and those who came to Islam later joined the senior Companions and helped and supported them in their endeavors to establish the religion of Allah and call people to it is like the seed which sends forth its shoot, then makes it strong; then it grows thick and stands straight on its stem.

Hence Allah says: **{so that He may infuriate the disbelievers through them}** when they see the believers' unity and firm adherence to their religion, and when they confront one another in the battlefield.

{Allah has promised those among them who believe and do righteous deeds forgiveness and an immense reward}. The Companions combined faith and righteous deeds, so Allah combined for them forgiveness that results in protection from the evils of this world and the hereafter with great reward in this world and the hereafter.

(118) If a wrongdoer (fasiq) comes to you with news

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا
بِجَهْلَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ

[الحجرات : ٦]

O you who believe, if a wrongdoer comes to you with any news, investigate [and verify the facts], lest you harm people out of ignorance, then come to regret your actions.

[Surah al-Hujurat 49:6]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

This also comes under the heading of the etiquette that people of understanding should follow. If an evildoer tells them some news, they should verify it and not accept it before that, because that involves a grave risk and falling into sin. If his report is given the same status as one who is truthful and of good character, you may take action or pass judgement on that basis, which may then result in the killing of people or destruction of property without justification, because of that news, and that would become a cause for regret. Rather what must be done in the event of news from a wrongdoer is to check and verify it.

If other indicators and circumstantial evidence point to it being true, then it may be believed and acted upon but if they indicate that it is false, then it is to be rejected and not acted upon. This indicates that news brought by one who is truthful may be accepted, whereas news brought by a liar is to be rejected. With regard to news brought by a wrongdoer, it depends, as we have mentioned above. Hence the early generations would accept the reports of many of the *Kharijites*, who were known to be honest, even if they were wrongdoers.

(119) The believers are but brothers

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

[الحجرات : ١٠]

The believers are but brothers, so make peace between your [contending] brothers. And fear Allah, so that you may be shown mercy.

[Surah al-Hujurat 49:10]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

{The believers are but brothers} this is a bond that Allah has established between the believers. If anyone in the furthest east or west is found to believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day, then he is a brother to the believers, with a bond of brotherhood that dictates that the believers should love for him what they love for themselves, and hate for him what they hate for themselves. Hence the Prophet ﷺ said, enjoining the fulfilment of the rights of brothers in faith:

«Do not envy one another, do not artificially inflate prices, do not hate one another, do not undersell one another, and be - O slaves of Allah - brothers. The believer is the brother of his fellow believer; he does not wrong him, let him down or despise him.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

And he ﷺ said: «**The believers are like a structure, parts of which support other parts.**» (Bukhari) And he interlaced his fingers.

Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have enjoined the believers to fulfil one another's rights, and to do that which will lead to harmony, love and understanding among them. All of that confirms the rights that they have over one another. Therefore, if fighting occurs among them that would lead to division, hatred and shunning of one another, let the believers bring about reconciliation between their brothers and strive to do that which will remove grudges and ill feeling.

Then Allah commands them to fear Him in general terms, and makes fulfilling the rights of fellow believers and fearing Allah conditions of His mercy, as He says: **{so that you may be shown mercy}**. If mercy is attained, then all that is good in this world and the hereafter is also attained. This indicates that not fulfilling the rights of fellow believers is one of the greatest barriers to divine mercy.

(120) Let not some ridicule others, for they may be better than them.

قال الله تعالى

**يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرُ قَوْمٌ مِّنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ
وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِّنْ نِّسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَلَا
تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ بِئْسَ الْأَسْمُ الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ وَمَن لَّمْ يَتُبْ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ**

[الحجرات : ١١]

O you who believe, let not some men ridicule others, for it may be that they are better than them; and let not some women ridicule others, for it may be that they are better than them. Do not speak ill of one another, and do not call each other by [offensive] nicknames. What a bad thing it is to be called an evildoer after having believed. And whoever does not repent, it is they who are the wrongdoers.

[Surah al-Hujurat 49:11]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

This is another of the rights that the believers have over one another, that some should not **{ridicule others}** in words or deeds that are indicative of looking down on one's Muslim

brother, because that is prohibited and is not permitted, as it is indicative of self-admiration on the part of the one who is mocking the other.

It may be that the one who is ridiculed is better than the one who is ridiculing him, as is usually the case, because mockery is only a reflection of a bad attitude and bad manners, and all bad characteristics. Hence the Prophet ﷺ said: **«It is sufficient evil for a man to look down on his Muslim brother.»** (Muslim)

Then Allah says: **{Do not speak ill of one another}** that is, do not criticize one another. That criticism may be verbal or by means of gestures; both are prohibited and carry a warning of hell, as Allah says elsewhere: **{Woe to every backbiter, fault-finder}** (al-Humazah 104: 1)

The literal meaning of this verse is "Do not speak ill of yourselves," because the believers should be like one body, and because if you criticize someone else, he will inevitably criticize you, and thus you will have brought it upon yourself.

{and do not call each other by [offensive] nicknames} that is, none of you should embarrass his brother by giving him an insulting nickname that he would not like to be called by. As for nicknames that are not offensive, they are not included in this.

{What a bad thing it is to be called an evildoer after having believed} that is, what a bad thing it is to change after having believed and carried out the duties of faith, by turning away from

the commands and prohibitions of faith and becoming rebellious evildoers, calling people by offensive nicknames.

{And whoever does not repent, it is they who are the wrongdoers}. This is what is required of the individual: to repent to Allah and try to settle matters with his Muslim brother by asking him to pardon and forgive him, and to praise him in order to make up for having criticized or insulted him.

{And whoever does not repent, it is they who are the wrongdoers}. Thus people are of **two** types: **(1)** those who wrong themselves and do not repent, and **(2)** those who repent and succeed. There is no third category.

(121) Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother?

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبَ بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ

[الحجرات : ١٢]

O you who believe, avoid suspicion in most cases, because in some cases suspicion is a sin. Do not spy on one another, and do not backbite one another. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would surely abhor it. So fear Allah; verily Allah is Accepting of repentance, Most Merciful.

[Surah al-Hujurat 49:12]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

Allah forbids suspicion in most cases, and thinking ill of the believers, **{because in some cases suspicion is a sin}**. Examples include suspicion that is not based on facts and evidence, and thinking ill of a person, which usually leads to saying and doing many things that are prohibited. That is because harbouring bad thoughts does not usually stop there; rather the bad thoughts persist until one says or does something that is not appropriate.

That also includes thinking ill of a Muslim, hating him and showing enmity towards him. What is enjoined is the opposite of that.

{Do not spy on one another} that is, do not seek out the faults of the Muslims. Leave the Muslim alone and pay no attention to his private affairs which, if they were to be investigated, there would appear of them that which is not appropriate.

{and do not backbite one another}. Backbiting, as the Prophet ﷺ said, means: «...saying about your brother something that he dislikes, even if it is true.» (Muslim)

Then Allah gives an off-putting likeness of backbiting, as He says: **{Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would surely abhor it}**. Backbiting him is likened to eating his flesh when he is dead, which is extremely abhorrent and repugnant. So just as you would hate to eat his flesh, especially when he is dead and lifeless, so too you should hate to backbite him and eat his flesh when he is alive.

{So fear Allah; verily Allah is Accepting of repentance, Most Merciful}. Accepting of repentance means that He guides and enables His slave to repent, then He accepts his repentance. He is Most Merciful to His slaves, as He calls them to that which will benefit them and accepts their repentance. This verse is indicative of the stern warning against backbiting and highlights

the fact that backbiting is a major sin, because Allah likens it to eating the flesh of a dead person, which is a major sin.

(122) We are closer to him than his jugular vein

قال الله تعالى

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ
مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ (١٦) إِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِّيَانِ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ
قَعِيدٌ (١٧) مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ (١٨)

[ق : ١٦-١٨]

We have created man, and We know what his soul whispers within him, for We are closer to him than his jugular vein (16) when the two recording angels record [his deeds], constantly accompanying him, one on his right, the other on his left (17) Not a word does he utter but there is with him a watcher, ready to record it (18)

[Surah Qaf 50:16-18]

◆ **Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:**

Here Allah tells us that He is the only Creator of humankind, male and female, and that He knows man's circumstances, what he keeps in his heart, and his thoughts.

He is **{closer to him than his jugular vein}**, which is the closest thing to a person; the jugular veins are the veins on both sides of the neck. This is a reminder to man to remember that his Creator is watching him; He sees what is in his heart and mind

and is close to him in all situations. So he should feel shy, lest Allah see him where He forbade him to be, or He not see him where He commanded him to be.

Similarly, he should bear in mind the angels, the noble scribes; he should respect them and beware of doing or saying anything that may be written down of things that are displeasing to the Lord of the worlds. Hence He says:

{when the two recording angels record [his deeds], constantly accompanying him} that is, they record all of a person's deeds **{one on his right}** who records his good deeds, and the other **{on his left}** who records his bad deeds. Each of them is **{constantly accompanying him}**, ready to do the work that is assigned to him.

{Not a word does he utter}, good or bad, **{but there is with him a watcher, ready to record it}** that is, he is watching him and is always present with him. This is like the verses in which Allah says: **{While indeed there are watchers appointed over you, honorable scribes, who know all that you do.} (al-Infitar 82: 10-12)**

(123) True fear of Allah

قال الله تعالى

يَوْمَ نَقُولُ لِجَهَنَّمَ هَلِ امْتَلَأَتْ وَتَقُولُ هَلْ مِنْ مَزِيدٍ (٣٠) وَأُزْلِفَتْ
الْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ (٣١) هَذَا مَا تُوعَدُونَ لِكُلِّ أَوَّابٍ حَفِيظٍ
(٣٢) مَنْ خَشِيَ الرَّحْمَنَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَجَاءَ بِقَلْبٍ مُنِيبٍ (٣٣) ادْخُلُوهَا
بِسَلَامٍ ذَلِكَ يَوْمُ الْخُلُودِ (٣٤) لَهُمْ مَا يَشَاءُونَ فِيهَا وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيدٌ (٣٥)

[ق : ٣٠-٣٥]

[Warn them of] the day when We will say to hell: Are you full?
and it will say: Can there be any more to come? (30) Paradise
will be brought within sight of the righteous, not far (31) [It
will be said:] This is what you were promised; it is for
everyone who constantly turned [to Us] and remained dutiful
(32) and feared the Most Gracious unseen, and came with a
sincere heart (33) Enter here in peace; this is the day of
eternity (34) There they will have all that they wish for, and
with Us there is yet more (35)

[Surah Qaf 50:30-35]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

{and feared the Most Gracious unseen} that is, he feared
Him on the basis of his knowledge of his Lord, in hope of His

mercy, and feared Allah unseen in all situations, even when people cannot see Him. This is true fear of Allah.

As for fearing Him in the presence of others, when they are looking at one, this is showing off and seeking reputation, and is not indicative of fear of Allah. Rather beneficial fear of Allah is fear of Him when one is alone and when one is with others.

Fearing Allah unseen stems from belief in the unseen, as opposed to believing when one sees some matters of the unseen, in which case faith and fear of Allah become inevitable and are not voluntary, because the person will see with his own eyes the punishment and the signs of Allah.

{and came with a sincere heart} such a person is described as turning to his Lord and as being motivated to please Him.

(124) The attributes of the righteous

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ (١٥) ءَاخِذِينَ مَا ءَاتَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا
قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ مُحْسِنِينَ (١٦) كَانُوا قَلِيلًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ (١٧)
وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ (١٨) وَفِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِّلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ
(١٩)

[الذاريات : ١٥-١٩]

Verily the righteous will be amidst gardens and springs (15)
receiving what their Lord will bestow upon them, because
before that they had been doers of good (16) They used to
sleep but little at night (17) and before dawn, they would seek
forgiveness (18) and in their wealth, there was a due share for
the beggar and the deprived (19)

[Surah adh-Dhariyaat 51:15-19]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

One of the best kinds of doing good is worshipping the
Creator by praying at night, which is indicative of sincerity and of
harmony between what is in the heart and the words one utters.
Hence Allah says: **{They}** namely the doers of good **{used to
sleep but little at night}** that is, their sleep at night was little.
Most of the night was spent in devotion to their Lord, by praying,

reading Qur'an, remembering Allah, calling upon Him and beseeching Him.

{and before dawn} that is, the time just before dawn **{they would seek forgiveness}** from Allah. So they would make their prayer last until the time just before dawn, then at the end of the night prayers, they would ask Allah for forgiveness in the manner of a sinner seeking forgiveness for his sin. Praying for forgiveness before dawn is an act that has a special virtue and character that is not present at other times, as Allah says, describing the people of faith and obedience: **{...those who pray for forgiveness before dawn.}** (Al 'Imran 3: 17)

{and in their wealth, there was a due share} whether obligatory or recommended

{for the beggar and the deprived} that is, for the needy who ask of people and those who do not ask.

**(125) Has there come to you the story of the honored
guests of Ibraheem?**

قال الله تعالى

هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ ضَيْفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ (٢٤) إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا
سَلَامًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ قَوْمٌ مُنْكَرُونَ (٢٥) فَرَاغَ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ فَجَاءَ بِعِجْلٍ
سَمِينٍ (٢٦) فَقَرَّبَهُ إِلَيْهِمْ قَالَ أَلَا تَأْكُلُونَ (٢٧) فَأَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً
قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ وَبَشَّرُوهُ بِغُلَامٍ عَلِيمٍ (٢٨) فَأَقْبَلَتِ امْرَأَتُهُ فِي صَرَّةٍ
فَصَكَّتْ وَجْهَهَا وَقَالَتْ عَجُوزٌ عَقِيمٌ (٢٩) قَالُوا كَذَلِكِ قَالَ رَبُّكِ إِنَّهُ
هُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ (٣٠) قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكُمْ أَيُّهَا الْمُرْسَلُونَ (٣١) قَالُوا إِنَّا
أُرْسِلْنَا إِلَى قَوْمٍ مُّجْرِمِينَ (٣٢) لِنُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ حِجَارَةً مِّن طِينٍ (٣٣)
مُسَوَّمَةً عِندَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُسْرِفِينَ (٣٤) فَأَخْرَجْنَا مَن كَانَ فِيهَا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
(٣٥) فَمَا وَجَدْنَا فِيهَا غَيْرَ بَيْتٍ مِّنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ (٣٦) وَتَرَكْنَا فِيهَا آيَةً
لِّلَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ (٣٧)

[الذاريات : ٢٤-٣٧]

**Has there come to you the story of the honored guests of
Ibraheem? (24) When they came to him and said: Peace. He
said: [And upon you be] peace; you are strangers [to me] (25)
Then he went quietly to his household, and brought a fatted
calf (26) He placed it before them and said: Will you not eat?**

(27) He conceived a fear of them. They said: Fear not, and gave him the glad tidings of a son endowed with knowledge (28) His wife cried out loud, struck her face and said: (How can that be, when I am] a barren old woman? (29) They said: Thus says your Lord. Verily He is Most Wise, All-Knowing (30) Ibraheem said: Then what is your business, O messengers? (31) They said: We have been sent to a wicked people (32) to unleash upon them [a shower of] stones of clay (33) specifically marked and kept with your Lord for the transgressors (34) We brought forth the believers who were in [the city] (35) but We found in it only one household of Muslims (36) And We left it as a sign for those who fear the painful punishment (37)

[Surah adh-Dhariyaat 51:24-37]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{Has there come to you} that is, has there not come to you **{the story of the honored guests of Ibraheem?}** For it is a strange and wondrous story. They were angels whom Allah sent to destroy the people of Loot, and He commanded them to pass by Ibraheem, so they came to him in the form of (human) guests.

{When they came to him and said: Peace. He said} in response to their greeting: **{[And upon you be] peace; you are strangers [to me]}** that is, you are people unknown, and I want you to tell me who you are. He did not know who they were until after that.

Hence he went quietly to his family - in other words, he slipped away discreetly - to bring food for them.

{and brought a fattened calf. He placed it before them} that is, he presented the food to them, **{and said: Will you not eat? He conceived a fear of them}** when he saw that their hands did not reach out for the food.

{They said: Fear not}, and they told him what they had come for, **{and gave him the glad tidings of a son endowed with knowledge}** namely Is-haq.

When his wife heard the glad tidings, she **{cried out loud}** with joy **{struck her face}** - which is something that women do when they are happy, and they say and do other things that are contrary to ordinary behavior.

{and said: [How can that be, when I am] a barren old woman} That is, how can I have a child, when I am an old woman who is past childbearing age and, moreover, I am barren and my womb has never been fit to bear a child, so there are two impediments, each of which on its own is sufficient to prevent me having a child.

A third impediment is mentioned in *Soorat Hood*, where she said: **{...and this husband of mine is an old man? That would be a strange thing indeed!}** (Hood 11: 72)

{They said: Thus says your Lord} that is, it is Allah Who has decreed and ordained that, and there is nothing strange about the might and power of Allah.

{Verily He is Most Wise, All-Knowing} that is, He does what is appropriate, and encompasses all things by His knowledge. So submit to His decree and show gratitude to Him for His blessing.

{Ibraheem said} to them: **{Then what is your business, O messengers?}** That is, what is your purpose and what do you want? Because he felt that they were messengers whom Allah had sent for some important purpose.

{They said: We have been sent to a wicked people} namely the people of Loot, who had done evil deeds, associated others with Allah, rejected their Messenger and committed shameful deeds that were utterly unprecedented.

{to unleash upon them [a shower of] stones of clay, specifically marked and kept with your Lord for the transgressors} that is, each one is marked for a specific person, because they had transgressed and overstepped all bounds.

Ibraheem started to argue with them for the people of Loot, in the hope that Allah might ward off the punishment from them. But Allah said:

{O Ibraheem, cease your pleading, for verily the decree of your Lord has gone forth; verily there is coming to them a punishment that cannot be averted} (Hood 11: 76)

{We brought forth the believers who were in [the city], but We found in it only one household of Muslims} namely the household of Loot, apart from his wife, for she was one of the doomed.

{And We left it as a sign for those who fear the painful punishment} so that they might learn a lesson from it and know that Allah is severe in punishment, and that His Messengers are honest and trustworthy.

What this story includes of wisdom and rulings

The wisdom and rulings seen in this story include the following:

- It is wise that Allah tells His slaves the stories of both good and evil people, so that they may learn from their stories and the fate of each group.
- The virtue of Ibraheem *al-Khaleel*, because Allah begins his story with that which sheds light on its importance and how He paid special attention to it.
- It is prescribed to be hospitable, for this is the way of Ibraheem *al-Khaleel*, which Allah enjoined this Prophet ﷺ and his *Ummah* to follow. Allah mentions it here by way of praising it.
- The guest is to be honored in various ways, in word and deed, because Allah describes the guests of Ibraheem as honored. In other words, Ibraheem honored them, and Allah describes the hospitality that he offered them in word and deed. They were also honored by Allah.

- The house of Ibraheem was a place that was frequented by passers-by and visitors, because they entered upon him without seeking permission; rather they followed the etiquette of initiating the greeting of *salam*, and Ibraheem responded with a more complete greeting, because his greeting (as indicated by the Arabic wording) was indicative of a wish that peace be upon them all the time.
- It is prescribed to ask people who come to you or with whom contact takes place to introduce themselves, because there are many benefits in doing so.
- We see Ibraheem's politeness and gentleness in speech, as he said: **{you are strangers [to me]} (51: 25)**, rather than saying, "I do not know you." The difference between the two phrases is obvious.
- One should hasten to offer hospitality, because the best good deed is that which is done without delay. Hence Ibraheem hastened to prepare a meal for his guests.
- If meat that has already been prepared is offered to a guest, this is not disrespectful in the slightest; rather it is an honor, as Ibraheem did that, and Allah tells us that his guests were honored.
- Allah tells us of what He blessed His close friend Ibraheem with of great generosity, as this food was ready to be served, and his house was in a state of constant readiness to welcome guests, so

he did not need to go and fetch food from the market or from his neighbors and the like.

- Ibraheem was the one who served his guests, even though he was the close friend of the Most Gracious. The man of dignity and honor is the one who serves his guests.

- He brought the food to them, to the place where they were sitting, and he did not put it somewhere else and tell them to come and have some food, because this is easier for them and is better.

- One should speak gently and show politeness to one's guest, especially when offering him food. Ibraheem offered the food to them and requested them to eat in a very gentle manner, saying: **{Will you not eat?} (51: 27)**. He did not say "You have to eat" and other such phrases that are not the most preferable; rather his approach was that of requesting them to eat.

- The one who wants to follow his example should use nice words, as appropriate to the situation, such as saying to his guests: Will you not eat? Or: Please do us the honor of eating with us, and the like.

- If a person is afraid of someone for any reason, that person should reassure him, and say things to put his mind at rest and calm him down, as the angels said to Ibraheem, when he was afraid of them: **{Fear not} (51: 28)** and they told him of those glad tidings after he had been afraid of them.

- We see the great joy of Sarah, the wife of Ibraheem, to the extent that she struck her face and cried out loud, which was not usual behavior on her part.
- Allah honored Ibraheem and his wife Sarah with the glad tidings of a knowledgeable son.

(126) Continue to exhort them, for exhortation benefits the believers.

قال الله تعالى

وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ الذِّكْرَ تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

[الذاريات : ٥٥]

And continue to exhort them, for exhortation benefits the believers.

[Surah adh-Dhariyaat 51:55]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{And continue to exhort them, for exhortation benefits the believers}. Exhortation is of **two** types, the **first** of which is telling that of which the details are not known, although it is known in general terms through common sense and reasoning. Allah has caused everyone, on the basis of common sense, to love good and give precedence to it, and to hate evil and keep away from it, and His laws are in accordance with that. Therefore, all that He enjoins or forbids comes under the heading of exhortation. Proper exhortation is to mention the goodness and benefits in what is enjoined, and the harm in what is prohibited.

The **second** type of exhortation is to remind the believers to do what is known to them, but they have grown careless and heedless about it. For that reason, they should be reminded repeatedly, so that the exhortation will take root in their minds and they will begin to pay attention to what they are reminded of. Thus their energy, motivation and resolve will be renewed, which will make them try to benefit from the exhortation and achieve progress.

Allah tells us that exhortation benefits the believers, because what they have of faith and fear of Allah, and their constant turning to Him and seeking His pleasure, allows them to benefit from the reminder and makes the exhortation more effective in this case. This is like the verses in which Allah says:

{So remind people, if the reminder will be of benefit. The one who fears Allah will pay heed while the wretched one will avoid it.} (al- A 'la 87: 9-11)

As for those who do not have faith and are not prepared to pay heed to the exhortation, they will not benefit from it. This is like the salty ground that does not benefit at all from the rain; even if every sign were to come to this type of people, they would not believe until they see the painful punishment with their own eyes.

**(127) I have not created the jinn and humans except to
worship Me**

قال الله تعالى

**وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ (٥٦) مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ وَمَا
أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُونِ (٥٧) إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ (٥٨)**

[الذاريات : ٥٦-٥٨]

**I have not created the jinn and humans except to worship Me
(56) I seek no provision from them, nor do I want them to feed
Me (57) Indeed, it is Allah Who is the Provider, Lord of Might,
the Powerful (58)**

[Surah adh-Dhariyaat 51:56-58]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This is the purpose for which Allah created the *jinn* and humankind, and sent all the Messengers to call to it, namely to worship Him alone, which implies knowing Him, loving Him, turning to Him and turning away from all others.

That implies knowing Him, for worshipping properly depends on knowing Allah; in fact, the more a person knows his Lord, the more perfect his worship will be. This is the purpose for which Allah created those who are accountable; He did not create them out of any need for them on His part.

Allah does not want any provision from them and He does not want them to feed Him; exalted be Allah, the Self-Sufficient, Who has no need of anyone in any way. Rather all creatures are in need of Him for all their needs and essential necessities. Hence He says: **{Indeed, it is Allah Who is the Provider}** that is, He gives abundant provision, and there is no creature that lives on the earth but its sustenance is guaranteed by Allah. He knows its dwelling place and its resting place (11: 6).

{Lord of Might, the Powerful} that is, the One Who possesses all strength and might, Who brought all great entities, in the upper and lower realm, into being. By that power all affairs, both apparent and hidden, are controlled and His will is done in all realms. Whatever Allah wills happens, and whatever He does not will does not happen. No one can flee from Him or escape His authority. By His Might He causes His provision to reach all the worlds. By His might and strength, He will resurrect the dead after their bodies have disintegrated and their dust has been scattered by the winds, or they have been devoured by birds and wild animals and scattered in the far reaches of the wilderness and in the depths of the sea. No one can escape Him; He knows what the earth consumes of them. Glory be to the Most Strong, the Powerful.

(128) The Sunnah is revelation just like the Qur'an

قال الله تعالى

وَالنَّجْمِ إِذَا هَوَىٰ (١) مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ (٢) وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ
الْهَوَىٰ (٣) إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ (٤)

[النجم : ١-٤]

By the star when it sets (1) your companion has neither
strayed nor erred (2) nor does he speak of his own accord (3)
It is but divine inspiration (4)

[Surah an-Najm 53:1-4]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{nor does he speak of his own accord} that is, what he says
does not stem from his own whims and desires.

{It is but divine inspiration} that is, he ﷺ is only following
what Allah reveals to him of guidance and righteousness; he is
guided in himself and is guiding others.

This indicates that the *Sunnah* is also revelation from Allah
to His Messenger ﷺ, as He says: **{...For Allah has sent down to
you the Book and wisdom...}** (an- Nisa 4: 113)

He is protected and infallible with regard to what he says
about Allah and about religious rulings, because these words do

not stem from his own whims and desires; rather they are based on divine inspiration.

(129) Is the reward of goodness anything but goodness?

قال الله تعالى

هَلْ جَزَاءُ الْإِحْسَنِ إِلَّا الْإِحْسَنُ

[الرحمن : ٦٠]

Is the reward of goodness anything but goodness?

[Surah ar-Rahman 55:60]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

That is, is the reward of the one who does well in worshipping the Creator and showing kindness to His slaves anything other than that he will be treated well, rewarded greatly and granted the ultimate triumph, eternal blessing and a life of ease? These two sublime gardens are for those who are close to Allah.

(130) Know that the life of this world is nothing but play and distraction

قال الله تعالى

**اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهُمْ زِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي
الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ فَتَرَاهُ
مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَمًا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ
وَرِضْوَانٌ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ**

[الحديد : ٢٠]

Know that the life of this world is nothing but play and a distraction, adornment and boasting among yourselves, and rivalry in wealth and children. It is like plants that flourish after rain, pleasing the sowers, then they wither, and you see them turn yellow, then they crumble. And in the hereafter there will be a severe punishment, or forgiveness from Allah and His good pleasure. For the life of this world is nothing but a fleeting vanity.

[Surah al-Hadid 57:20]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah tells us about the real nature of this world and how it actually is, highlighting that all that may be said of it, and

all that its people can get from it, is that it is play and a distraction for hearts and bodies. This is confirmed by what you find in real life of people who focus only on worldly matters; you will find them spending their lifetimes in distraction, heedless of the remembrance of Allah and of what lies ahead of divine promises and warnings, and you see them taking their religion as a mere game and mockery.

In contrast, those who are aware and strive for the hereafter have hearts that constantly remember Allah, know him and love Him; they fill their time with righteous deeds that will bring them closer to Allah and may benefit them or may benefit them and others.

{adornment} - this refers to adornment in clothing, food and drink, means of transportation, houses and palaces, status, and other things

{and boasting among yourselves} that is, each one of its people wants to boast to others and be the one who prevails in worldly matters and the one who is famous in terms of worldly splendour.

{and rivalry in wealth and children} that is, each one wants to be the one who has more than others in terms of wealth and children. This is the case with those who love this world and are content with it.

This is in contrast to those who know how this world really is and regard it as a place to pass through, not a place to settle

in. Therefore, they compete in that which will bring them closer to Allah, and take measures to help them reach Him, and if they see those who compete with them in accumulating wealth and children, they compete with them in righteous deeds.

Then Allah compares this world to the rain that falls on the ground, by means of which all kinds of plants are brought forth from the earth, from which both people and animals eat. Then when the land is at its loveliest and takes on its fairest appearance, and is pleasing to the sowers whose main focus is worldly gain, there comes to it the decree of Allah that it should be destroyed, so it withers and dries up, and the land returns to its former state, as if nothing green had ever grown there and it had never looked elegant and beautiful.

Such is this world: whilst it is flourishing for the one who focuses on it, and whatever he wants of worldly gains he attains it, and whatever he seeks to achieve of worldly matters, he finds the doors to it wide open, suddenly the divine decree comes to pass and it is all taken away from him; he loses control over worldly matters, or he is taken from this world in death, so he departs from it empty-handed, having taken nothing from it in terms of provisions except his shroud. How doomed is the one for whom this world is the sum of his aspirations, and it is all he works and strives for?

As for striving for the hereafter, that is what is of benefit and is stored up for a person and will stay with him forever.

Hence Allah says: **{And in the hereafter there will be a severe punishment, or forgiveness from Allah and His good pleasure}** that is, in the hereafter, there can only be one of these two scenarios:

(1) Either severe punishment in the fire of hell, with its chains, fetters and horrors for those whose only aim and aspiration was worldly gain, so they had the audacity to disobey Allah, reject His revelations and show ingratitude for His blessings;

(2) or forgiveness from Allah for bad deeds, protection from punishment, and the good pleasure of Allah. This is for those who recognised this world for what it was and strove hard for the hereafter.

All of this should prompt people to lose interest in this world and focus on the hereafter. Hence Allah says: **{For the life of this world is nothing but a fleeting vanity}** that is, it is nothing but something to be enjoyed briefly and benefited from, to meet one's needs. No one is deceived by it and content with it except people of weak reasoning who are deceived by the *Shaytan*.

(131) He will give you a double portion of His mercy

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَءَامِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ ۖ يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ ۖ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ نُورًا تَمْشُونَ بِهِ ۖ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

[الحديد : ٢٨]

**O you who believe, fear Allah and believe in His Messenger;
He will [then] give you a double portion of His mercy and
make for you a light by which you will walk and forgive you;
and Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.**

[Surah al-Hadid 57:28]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Allah instructed them to believe and to fear Him, which includes all issues of religion, both outward and inward, fundamental and minor issues; if they obey this important command, Allah will grant them a double share of His mercy, the description and extent of which no one knows but Allah.

It may be a reward for believing and a reward for fearing Allah, or a reward for obeying the commands and a reward for heeding the prohibitions; or it may be that referring to a double reward means that the reward will be given repeatedly, time after time.

{Make for you a light by which you will walk and forgive you} He will give you knowledge, guidance and light by which to walk through the darkness of ignorance, and He will forgive you your bad deeds.

{And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful} so no one should think that it is too much for the Possessor of abundant grace to give this reward, for His grace encompasses the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth, so there is not a single moment in which created beings are not receiving divine grace and bounty.

**(132) Allah will raise in status those of you who believe
and those who have been given knowledge**

قال الله تعالى

**يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا فِي الْمَجَالِسِ فَافْسَحُوا يَفْسَحِ
اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَإِذَا قِيلَ أَنْشُرُوا فَأَنْشُرُوا يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ
أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ**

[المجادلة : ١١]

**O you who believe, when you are told to make room in your
gatherings, then make room: Allah will grant you abundance.**

**And when you are told to rise, then rise; Allah will raise in
status those of you who believe and [especially] those who
have been given knowledge. And Allah is well aware of all that
you do.**

[Surah al-Mujadilah 58:11]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah is teaching manners to His believing slaves, when they come together in a community gathering, and there is a need to make room for one another or for newcomers in the gathering. It is good manners to make room for them, and that will not harm anyone who is already sitting in the slightest, for his brother will be able to have room without causing any harm

to the one who is already there. The reward is of the same nature as the deed, so whoever makes room for others, Allah will grant him abundance.

{And when you are told to rise} that is, to give up your space in a gathering for some reason, **{then rise}** that is, hasten to get up to serve that purpose.

Doing these things is part of knowledge and faith, for Allah will raise the people of knowledge and faith in status according to what He has bestowed upon them of knowledge and faith.

{And Allah is well aware of all that you do} and He will requite each person for his deeds; if they are good, then the outcome will be good, and if they are bad then the outcome will be bad.

This verse refers to the virtue of knowledge, and tells us that the beauty and outcome thereof is to observe proper etiquette and act in accordance with that knowledge.

(133) Whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and whatever he forbids you, refrain from it.

قال الله تعالى

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا

[الحشر : ٧]

Whatever the Messenger gives you [of the gains, or of instructions], accept it, and whatever he forbids to you, refrain from it.

[Surah al-Hashr 59:7]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Allah enjoined a basic guideline and general principle when He said: **{Whatever the Messenger gives you [of the gains, or of instructions], accept it, and whatever he forbids to you, refrain from it}**. This includes both fundamental and minor issues of religion, whether they have to do with outward conduct or inward beliefs and attitudes. Whatever the Messenger ﷺ gives, it is obligatory for people to pay heed to it and follow it, and it is not permissible to go against it. If the Messenger ﷺ gives a ruling, it is like a ruling from Allah, and no concession or excuse is granted to anyone to refrain from doing it. It is not permissible to give precedence to the view of anyone else over the view of the Prophet ﷺ.

**(134) O you who believe, why do you say that which
you do not do?**

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ (٢) كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ
تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ (٣)

[الصف : ٢-٣]

**O you who believe, why do you say that which you do not do?
(2) It is most loathsome to Allah that you say that which you
do not do (3)**

[Surah as-Saff 61:2-3]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

**{O you who believe, why do you say that which you do not
do?}** That is, why do you speak good words, urge people to do
good, and perhaps boast of doing it yourselves, when you do not
do it; and you forbid evil and declare yourselves above doing it,
yet you are contaminated with it, and it is part of your regular
deeds?

Is such a blameworthy attitude befitting for the believers?!
Is it not something most loathsome before Allah that a person
says what he does not do?!

The one who enjoins good should be the first one to hasten to do it, and the one who forbids evil should be the furthest removed of all people from it.

Allah says elsewhere:

{Do you enjoin righteousness upon people while you ignore your own selves, even though you study the scripture? Will you not then understand?} (al-Baqarah 2: 44)

And Shuayb said to his people:

{...I do not want to do that which I am forbidding you to do...} (Hood 11: 88)

(135) They want to extinguish Allah's light with their utterances, but Allah will perfect His light.

قال الله تعالى

**وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَبْنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا
لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدُ
فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ (٦) وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ
افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُوَ يُدْعَى إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ
الظَّالِمِينَ (٧) يُرِيدُونَ لِيُظْفَرُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ
كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ (٨) هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَى وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ
لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ (٩)**

[الصف : ٦-٩]

And [remember] when 'Eesa ibn Maryam said: O Children of Israel, verily I am the Messenger of Allah to you, confirming what came before me of the Torah, and bringing glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name will be Ahmad. But when he came to them with clear signs, they said: This is obviously magic (6) Who does greater wrong than he who fabricates lies against Allah when he is called to Islam? And Allah does not guide people who are given to wrongdoing (7) They want to extinguish Allah's light with their utterances, but

Allah will perfect His light, even though the disbelievers hate it (8) It is He Who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, so that He may cause it to prevail over all other religions, even though the polytheists hate it (9)

[Surah as-Saff 61:6-9]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah speaks of the stubbornness of the Children of Israel mentioned above, when 'Eesa ibn Maryam called them, saying: **{O Children of Israel, verily I am the Messenger of Allah to you}** that is, Allah has sent me to call you to goodness and forbid to you evil, and He has supported me with clear proof. What confirms my truthfulness is the fact that I am **{confirming what came before me of the Torah}**. That is, I have come to you with the same message as that brought by Moosa, of the Torah and divine laws. If I were a pretender to prophethood, I would have brought something other than that which the Messengers brought. I also confirm that which came before me of the Torah, for it foretold my coming and gave the glad tidings thereof. I have come and have been sent in confirmation of it, **{and bringing glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name will be Ahmad}**. He is Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib ﷺ, the Hashimi Prophet.

'Eesa, like other Prophets, confirmed the Prophet who came before him and gave glad tidings of the Prophet to come after him, unlike the liars who contradict the Prophets in an

extreme manner, and differ from them in attitude, manners, commands and prohibitions.

{But when he} namely Muhammad ﷺ, whose coming was foretold by 'Eesa **{came to them with clear signs}** that is, clear proof that indicated that he was the one, and that he was a true Messenger of Allah, **{they said}**, stubbornly rejecting the truth and disbelieving in it: **{This is obviously magic}** And this is something very strange indeed.

To regard the Messenger ﷺ, whose message was as clear as day, as a magician who is obviously practicing magic, can there be any failure greater than this? Is there any fabrication worse than this, when one denies what is well-established of his message and attributes to him something from which he is the furthest removed of all people?

{Who does greater wrong than he who fabricates lies against Allah} by making this and other claims, when in fact he has no excuse and no reason for doing so, because he is **{called to Islam}** and its proof and evidence have been presented to him.

{And Allah does not guide people who are given to wrongdoing} who persist in their wrongdoing, and no exhortation, proof or evidence deters them from it.

This is especially applicable to these wrongdoers who are striving hard to oppose the truth and refute it, and to support falsehood. Hence Allah says of them:

{They want to extinguish Allah's light with their utterances} that is, with what they say of corrupt arguments on the basis of which they reject the truth when this argument has no solid foundation; rather their arguments increase the one who has insight in awareness of the falsehood to which they adhere.

{but Allah will perfect His light, even though the disbelievers hate it} that is, Allah has guaranteed to support His religion and perfect the truth with which He sent His Messengers, and to cause His light to shine in all regions, even if the disbelievers hate it and, because of their hatred, they take all measures that they think will help them to extinguish the light of Allah. But they will be defeated.

They are like someone who tries to blow on the disc of the sun in order to extinguish it. They will never achieve what they want and their minds will never be safe from criticism and aspersions.

Then Allah mentions the means by which the Islamic religion will prevail, both physical measures and rational arguments, as He says:

{It is He Who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth} that is, with beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds. That is knowledge with which he guides people to Allah and to paradise, and he guides to the best deeds and

attitudes, and to that which is in people's best interests in this world and the hereafter.

{and the religion of truth} that is, a religion to which to adhere and worship the Lord of the worlds in accordance with its teachings, a religion that is true, in which there are no imperfections or flaws; rather its commands offer nourishment to hearts and souls and physical wellbeing to bodies, and refraining from what it forbids offers protection from evil and corruption.

What the Prophet ﷺ was sent with of guidance and the religion of truth is the greatest proof and evidence of his truthfulness, and it is proof that will last until the end of time. The more a person reflects upon it, the more he will feel at ease and increase in joy and insight.

{so that He may cause it to prevail over all other religions} that is, so that He may cause it to prevail over all other religions on the basis of proof and evidence, and so that He may cause its people who adhere to it to prevail by means of the sword and spear.

With regard to the religion itself, this prevalence is persistent at all times. No one tries to resist it or oppose it but he will be defeated, and Islam will prevail and subdue its opponents. As for those who follow the religion of Islam, if they adhere to it and follow its light and guidance in all their religious and worldly affairs, then by the same token no one will be able

to resist them, and they will inevitably prevail over the followers of other religions.

But if they neglect it and are content merely to claim to belong to it, that will not benefit them, and their negligence towards it will become the cause of their enemies gaining power over them.

Anyone who studies the affairs of the Muslims, and their earlier and later generations, will be well aware of that.

(136) When the call to prayer is given on Friday

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ
اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ (٩) فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ
الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ (١٠) وَإِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَارَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا انفَضُّوا إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكُوكَ
قَائِمًا قُلْ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِّنَ اللَّهْوِ وَمِنَ التِّجَارَةِ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الرَّزَاقِينَ
(١١)

[الجمعة : ٩-١١]

O you who believe, when the call to prayer is given on Friday, then proceed at once to the remembrance of Allah and leave off your trading. That is better for you, if only you knew (9) Then when the prayer is ended, disperse through the land and seek Allah's bounty, and remember Allah much, so that you may prosper (10) When they see some merchandise or distraction, they rush towards it and leave you standing there. Say: That which is with Allah is better than any distraction or merchandise. And Allah is the best of providers (11)

[Surah al-Jumu'ah 62:9-11]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah commands His slaves to attend *Jumu'ah* prayer, and to hasten to the prayer as soon as the call is given, proceeding at once to the prayer. What is meant by proceeding at once here is to hasten to the prayer and pay attention to it, for it is the most important activity of the day. It does not mean running to join the prayer, because running when going to pray is disallowed.

{and leave off your trading} that is, cease trading once the call to prayer is given, and go to pray.

{That is better for you} than focusing on trade and missing the obligatory prayer, which is one of the most important obligations.

{if only you knew} that what is with Allah is better and more lasting, and that whoever gives precedence to this world over religion has truly lost when he thinks he is winning. This command to cease trading is temporary, for the duration of the prayer.

{Then when the prayer is ended, disperse through the land} to seek your livelihood and engage in trade.

Because focusing on trade is likely to make one forget to remember Allah, Allah instructs His slaves to remember Him a great deal, as He says:

{and remember Allah much} that is, when standing, sitting and lying on your sides

{so that you may prosper}, because remembering Allah much is one of the greatest means of attaining prosperity.

{When they see some merchandise or distraction, they rush towards it} that is, they leave the mosque, out of eagerness to see that distraction or that merchandise. They leave what is good, **{and leave you standing there}**, addressing the people. This refers to an incident that occurred one Friday, when the Prophet ﷺ was addressing the people. A trade caravan came to Madinah, and when the people heard of it whilst they were in the mosque, they went out of the mosque and left the Prophet ﷺ addressing the people, and hastened towards that to which they should not have hastened, forgetting their manners.

{Say: That which is with Allah} of reward for the one who adheres to goodness and is patient in worshipping his Lord

{is better than any distraction or merchandise}. Although there is some benefit in trade, it is little and tainted, and it will be the cause of missing out on goodness in the hereafter, whereas patience in obeying Allah and continuing one's act of worship does not cause one to miss out on provision, for Allah is the best of providers. So whoever fears Allah, He will grant him provision from where he does not expect.

From this passage we learn many things, including the following:

- *Jumu'ah* prayer is obligatory for all believing men and they must proceed to it at once, hasten towards it and give priority to it.
- The two *khutbahs* on Friday are obligatory and must be attended, because what is meant by remembrance or reminder here is the two *khutbahs*. Allah has enjoined us to go to the remembrance of Allah and hasten to do so.
- It is prescribed and enjoined to give the call to prayer for *Jumu'ah*.
- It is prohibited to buy and sell after the call to *Jumu'ah* prayer. That is only because these actions cause one to miss out on the obligatory duty and distract one from it. This indicates that any matter, even if it is permissible in principle, if it results in missing something obligatory, then it is not permissible in that case.
- It is enjoined to attend the two *khutbahs* on Friday, and the one who does not attend them is blameworthy. What that implies is that one should listen attentively to both of them.
- The individual should focus on worshipping Allah at a time when he is inclined to turn to distractions and trade, and respond to his desires. He should remind himself of that which is with Allah of reward for the one who gives precedence to pleasing Allah over his own whims and desires.

(137) No calamity occurs except by Allah's leave

قال الله تعالى

مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ (١١) وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ (١٢) اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ (١٣)

[التغابن : ١١-١٣]

No calamity occurs except by Allah's leave. Whoever believes in Allah, He will guide his heart aright. And Allah has knowledge of all things (11) Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger. But if you turn away, then know that the duty of Our Messenger is only to convey the message in the clearest way (12) Allah, there is no god but He; and in Allah let the believers put their trust (13)

[Surah at-Taghabun 64:11-13]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

{No calamity occurs except by Allah's leave} this is general in meaning and includes all calamities, whether they affect the individual himself, his wealth, his children, his loved ones and so on.

Everything that befalls people happens by the will and decree of Allah, and was already known to Allah in His prior knowledge and was written by His pen, ordained by His will and dictated by His wisdom. What matters is whether the individual will do what is required of him or not.

If he does what is required of him, then he will have a great reward in this world and the hereafter.

If he believes that it is from Allah, and he accepts it and submits to His decree, Allah will guide his heart, and he will be reassured and will not panic at times of calamity, as happens in the case of one whose heart is not guided by Allah. Indeed, Allah will grant him steadfastness when calamity strikes, and will help them to adhere to patience. Thus he will attain reward in this world, in addition to what Allah has stored up for him on the day of requital. As Allah says elsewhere: **{...Verily, those who are patient and steadfast will be rewarded abundantly, without measure} (as-Zumar 39: 10)**

Thus it is known that whoever does not believe in Allah when calamity strikes, in the sense that he does not acknowledge the divine will and decree, and focuses only on causes, will be forsaken and Allah will leave him to his own devices. If a person is left to his own devices, in that case he has nothing left at the time of calamity except panic and despair, which is an immediate punishment before the punishment of the hereafter, for having fallen short in adhering to patience.

This has to do with the meaning of the phrase **{Whoever believes in Allah, He will guide his heart aright}** within the limited context of calamity. As for what the phrase means in general terms, Allah tells us that for everyone who believes - in the manner enjoined, believing in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and the divine decree, both good and bad - and confirms his faith by doing what it requires of duties, this is a great means of attaining Allah's guidance in all his circumstances, words and deeds, and in his knowledge and action.

This is the best reward that Allah bestows upon those who believe, as He says when telling us that He will make the believers steadfast in the life of this world and in the hereafter.

Steadfastness means constancy, patience and certainty in the heart when trials come. Allah says: **{Allah will make steadfast those who believe, with the word that stands firm, in this world and in the hereafter...} (Ibraheem 14: 27)**

The believers are the most guided of people in their hearts, and the most steadfast at times of panic and anxiety; this is because of what they have of faith.

{Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger} that is, by complying with their commands and heeding their prohibitions. Obedience to Allah and obedience to His Messenger ﷺ form the foundation and basis of happiness and prosperity

{But if you turn away} from obedience to Allah and obedience to His Messenger ﷺ

{then know that the duty of Our Messenger is only to convey the message in the clearest way} that is, to convey to you that with which he has been sent to you in such a way that it becomes clear to you and proof is established against you (leaving no excuse for you). He ﷺ has no power to guide you or to bring you to account.

It is only the Knower of the unseen and the seen who will bring you to account for obedience to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, or otherwise.

{Allah, there is no god but He} that is, He is the only One Who is deserving of worship and devotion; everything that is worshipped besides Him is false.

{and in Allah let the believers put their trust} that is, let them rely on Him in every matter of concern to them, and in everything they want to do.

For nothing could be achieved except with the help of Allah, and there is no way to attain what one wants except by relying on Him. One cannot truly rely on Allah unless one thinks positively of Him and trusts Him to take care of the matter in which one is relying on Him, according to the level of one's faith. The stronger a person's faith is, the stronger his trust in Allah will be.

(138) Verily among your spouses and your children are some that are enemies to you

قال الله تعالى

**يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ وَأَوْلَادِكُمْ عَدُوًّا لَكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُمْ
وَإِنْ تَعْفُوا وَتَصْفَحُوا وَتَغْفِرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (١٤) إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ
وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ (١٥)**

[التغابن : ١٤-١٥]

**O you who believe, verily among your spouses and your children are some that are enemies to you, so beware of them. But if you pardon, overlook and forgive [their misdeeds], then verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful
(14) Your wealth and your children are but a trial, and with Allah there is an immense reward (15)**

[Surah at-Taghabun 64:14-15]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah warns the believers against being deceived by wives and children, for some of them are enemies to you; an enemy is one who wishes ill towards you. Your role is to be alert to anyone who is like that, for people are naturally inclined to love their wives and children.

Allah gives this advice to His slaves lest their love makes them succumb to the demands of wives and children, even if there is some *shar'i* reservation about what they want. He encourages people to adhere to His commands and give precedence to seeking His pleasure by mentioning that which is with Him of great reward, which will help them to attain these sublime aims and goals, and to give precedence to the hereafter over this transient world.

Because the prohibition on obeying wives and children has to do with that which is harmful and is a warning against that, this may lead some to think that they should be harsh towards them and punish them. Therefore, Allah tells us to be cautious regarding them, yet at the same time to overlook and forgive, for that serves innumerable interests. Allah says:

{But if you pardon, overlook and forgive [their misdeeds], then verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful} because the reward matches the nature of the deed. So whoever pardons others, Allah will pardon him; whoever overlooks (their errors), Allah will overlook (his errors); whoever forgives them, Allah will forgive him. Whoever behaves with Allah as He likes him to, and behaves with His slaves as they like him to, and benefits them, will attain the love of Allah and the love of His slaves, and he will be in a good position.

(139) Whoever fears Allah, He will grant him a way out from difficulty.

قال الله تعالى

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا

[الطلاق : ٢]

Whoever fears Allah, He will grant him a way out [from difficulty].

[Surah at-Talaq 65:2]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

Whoever fears Allah and constantly seeks His pleasure in all his affairs, Allah will reward him in this world and the hereafter.

Part of that reward is that Allah will grant him relief and a way out from all difficulties and hardship.

Just as whoever fears Allah, He will grant him relief and a way out, by the same token, whoever does not fear Allah will face difficulties, obstacles and troubles that he cannot find a way out of or escape the consequences thereof.

(140) Verily you are upon exalted character

قال الله تعالى

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

[القلم : ٤]

And verily you [O Muhammad] are of an exalted character.

[Surah al-Qalam 68:4]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allāh have mercy on him] said:

Allah says: **{and verily you [O Muhammad] are of an exalted character}** that is, a sublime character, for you have attained an exalted position by virtue of your exalted character, with which Allah blessed you.

His exalted character may be summed up by the way the Mother of the Believers 'Aishah explained it to the one who asked her about it. She said: **His character was the Qur'an.** (Recorded by Abu Dawood, and authenticated by al-Albani)

This is similar to the verses in which Allah says:

{Make allowances for people's nature, enjoin what is right and turn away from the ignorant.} (al-A'raf 7: 199)

{It is by the mercy of Allah that you deal gently with them. If you had been harsh or hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you. So pardon them, and ask for

[Allah's] forgiveness for them; and consult them in matters of importance. Then, when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, for Allah loves those who put their trust [in Him].}
(Al 'Imran 3: 159)

{There has come to you a Messenger from among yourselves; it grieves him that you suffer, and he is full of concern for you; and towards the believers he is compassionate and merciful.} (at-Tawbah 9: 128)

And there are similar verses which indicate that the Prophet ﷺ possessed the noblest of characteristics, and which encourage us to strive to attain an exalted character. He possessed the best and noblest of characteristics, in each of which he attained the ultimate degree.

He was easy-going and gentle, and was close to people. He would accept the invitation of anyone who invited him, meet the need of anyone who asked him for help, and respond kindly to anyone who asked of him, never turning anyone away empty-handed.

If his Companions suggested something to him, he would agree with them and go along with them, provided that there were no *shar'i* reservations concerning it. If he wanted to decide about a matter, he would not make a decision concerning it without their involvement; rather he would consult them and seek their advice.

He would show appreciation to those among them who did good and forgive those who caused offence. He never sat and talked to anyone without showing the best behavior and attitude towards him; he would never frown at him or speak harshly to him, and he never stopped being cheerful with him; he would not take him to task for slips of the tongue, and he would overlook anything he showed of roughness; rather he would treat him extremely kindly and show great forbearance towards him.

(141) Stand up for the night prayer

قال الله تعالى

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَزْمَلُ (١) قُمْ اللَّيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا (٢) نُصْفَهُ أَوْ أَنْقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا (٣)
أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا (٤) إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا (٥) إِنَّ
نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْأً وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلًا (٦)

[المزمل : ١-٦]

O you who are enwrapped [in garments] (1) stand up in prayer throughout the night, except a little (2) half of it, or a little less than that (3) or a little more; and recite the Qur'an at a measured pace (4) Verily We are going to send down to you words of surpassing gravity (5) Verily prayer at night is more appropriate for focus and more conducive to proper recitation (6)

[Surah al-Muzzammil 73:1-6]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allāh have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah enjoins upon the Prophet ﷺ the noblest act of worship, namely prayer, and commands him to do it at the best and most virtuous of times, which is at night.

By His mercy, Allah did not command him to spend the entire night in prayer; rather He said: **{stand up in prayer throughout the night, except a little}**.

Then He gives an estimate of the length of time: **{half of it, or a little less than that}** that is, less than half, such as one-third and the like **{or a little more}** that is, a little more than half, such as two-thirds and the like.

{and recite the Qur'an at a measured pace} for reciting it at a measured pace facilitates reflection, has a greater impact on the heart, and enables one to worship Allah by reciting its verses, with complete focus.

{Verily We are going to send down to you words of surpassing gravity} that is, We are going to send down to you this Qur'an, which is of surpassing gravity, for its meanings are deeply significant and its attributes are great, and something like this deserves that you should prepare yourself for it, recite at a measured pace, and reflect upon what it contains.

Then Allah mentions the wisdom behind the command to pray at night:

{Verily prayer at night} after having slept

{is more appropriate for focus and more conducive to proper recitation} that is, it is more likely to achieve the purpose of the Qur'an when one focuses fully on what one is reciting, for there are few distractions at night, so one will be able to focus and understand the words one recites.

(142) We feed you only for the sake of Allah; we seek of you neither recompense or thanks.

قال الله تعالى

**يُوفُونَ بِالنَّذْرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ مُسْتَطِيرًا (٧) وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ
عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ ۖ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا (٨) إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ
مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا (٩) إِنَّا نَخَافُ مِنْ رَبِّنَا يَوْمًا غَمًّى قَمَطِرٍ
(١٠)**

[الإنسان : ٧-١٠]

They fulfil their vows and fear a day the evil of which will be widespread (7) and they give food, despite their love for it, to the needy, orphans and captives (8) [saying]: We feed you only for the sake of Allah; we seek of you neither recompense nor thanks (9) Verily we fear from our Lord a grim and awful day (10)

[Surah al-Insan 76:7-10]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allāh have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah tells us about some of the deeds of the righteous:

{They fulfil their vows} that is, they fulfil what they commit themselves to for the sake of Allah.

If they fulfil vows, which are not obligatory upon them unless they take that upon themselves, it is more likely that they will fulfil their commitment to basic obligatory duties.

{and fear a day the evil of which will be widespread} that is, it will spread and reach everywhere, so they fear that its evil may reach them, therefore they avoid everything that may lead to that.

{and they give food, despite their love for it} that is, although they love wealth and food, they give precedence to love of Allah over love of themselves, and they try to give their food to those who are most deserving and most in need of it, **{the needy, orphans and captives}**.

By spending and feeding others, they seek the pleasure of Allah, implicitly saying: **{We feed you only for the sake of Allah; we seek of you neither recompense nor thanks}** that is, we seek neither financial recompense nor verbal praise.

{Verily we fear from our Lord a grim} that is, very hard and evil **{and awful}** that is, stressful and miserable **{day}**.

(143) By the ten nights

قال الله تعالى

وَالْفَجْرِ (١) وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ (٢)

[الفجر : ١-٢]

By the dawn (1) By the ten nights (2)

[Surah al-Fajr 89:1-2]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Allah swears by the dawn, which is the end of the night and the onset of the day, because of what there is in the departure of the night and the coming of the day, of signs that point to the perfect might of Allah, and indicate that He alone is the controller of all things, and none should be worshipped except Him. At the time of dawn there is a prayer of great virtue, which deserves that Allah should swear by it.

Hence after that He swears by the ten nights which, according to the correct view, are the last ten nights of *Ramadan* or the first ten nights of *Dhul-Hijjah*. These are nights that contain days of great virtue, during which acts of worship are done that are not done at other times.

During the last ten nights of *Ramadan*, there occurs *Laylatal-Qadr* (the Night of Decree), which is better than a

thousand months, and those ten days are the last days of the fast of *Ramadan*, which is one of the pillars of Islam.

During the first ten days of *Dhul-Hijjah* there occurs the standing in '*Arafah*, during which Allah bestows forgiveness upon His slaves that causes the *Shaytan* to grieve. The *Shaytan* is never seen to be more humiliated and defeated than on the Day of '*Arafah*, because of what he sees of the descent of the angels and the mercy of Allah upon His slaves, and because of what happens on that day of many of the actions of *Hajj* and '*Umrah*. These are significant matters which deserve that Allah should swear by them.

(144) We will make easy for him the path of salvation

قال الله تعالى

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَى وَاتَّقَى (٥) وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَى (٦) فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ وَلِيُّهُ (٧)
وَأَمَّا مَنْ بَخِلَ وَاسْتَغْنَى (٨) وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَى (٩) فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْعُسْرَى (١٠)

[الليل : ٥-١٠]

As for him who gives in charity and fears Allah (5) and believes in the ultimate good (6) We will make easy for him the path of salvation (7) But as for him who is miserly and thinks he has no need of Allah (8) and denies the ultimate good (9) We will make easy for him the path of perdition (10)

[Surah al-Layl 92:5-10]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

{As for him who gives in charity} that is, he does what he is enjoined to do of financial acts of worship, such as giving *zakah*, offering expiation, spending on maintenance of family members, giving charity and spending on good causes; and he also does physical acts of worship such as prayer, fasting and so on; and acts of worship that combine both physical and financial elements, such as *Hajj* and *'Umrah*, and so on

{and fears Allah} with regard to what He has forbidden of prohibited matters and sins of various kinds.

{and believes in the ultimate good} that is, he believes in *la ilaha illa Allah* (there is no god that has the right to be worshipped except Allah) and all that it points to of religious beliefs and all that it leads to of reward in the hereafter.

{We will make easy for him the path of salvation} - that is, we will make his affairs easy for him and will make all that is good easy for him, and We will make it easy for him to refrain from all evil, because he has taken measures that lead to that, so Allah will make it easy for him.

{But as for him who is miserly} with regard to what he is instructed to spend, so he does not spend in the ways that are obligatory or recommended, and he does not have any desire to do that which Allah has enjoined,

{and thinks he has no need of Allah} so he does not submit to Him and does not think that his soul is in desperate need of its Lord, for there is no salvation, success or prosperity unless Allah is his ultimate object of love and worship, Whom he seeks and to Whom he turns.

{and denies the ultimate good} that is, he denies the goodly beliefs that Allah has enjoined people to believe in.

{We will make easy for him the path of perdition} so he will adopt bad and blameworthy characteristics, because it is made easy for him to commit evil and get carried away with acts of disobedience. We ask Allah to keep us safe and sound.

(145) Truly with hardship comes ease

قال الله تعالى

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا (٥) إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا (٦)

[الشرح : ٥-٦]

So truly with hardship comes ease (5)

Truly with hardship comes ease (6)

[Surah ash-Sharh 94:5-6]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

{So truly with hardship comes ease, truly with hardship comes ease}. This is great glad tidings, for every time there is hardship and difficulty, it is accompanied by ease, to the extent that even if hardship were to enter a lizard hole, ease would enter upon it and expel it, as Allah says elsewhere: **{...Allah will bring about, after hardship, ease}** (at-Talaq 65: 7)

And the Prophet ﷺ said: «Verily there is relief with distress, and verily there is with hardship ease.» (at-Tirmidhi)

The fact that the word translated here as **{hardship}** appears in the definite form indicates that it refers to one hardship, whereas the fact that the word translated here as **{ease}** appears in the indefinite form indicates that it is more

than one, and one hardship can never overwhelm plural or repeated ease.

The definite form conveys a generic meaning and refers to any kind of hardship, indicating that any hardship - no matter what degree of difficulty it reaches - will ultimately and inevitably be relieved.

(146) They were enjoined only to worship Allah with sincere devotion to Him

قال الله تعالى

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ (٥) إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أُولَئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ الْبَرِيَّةِ (٦) إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ (٧) جَزَاؤُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ عَدْنٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ (٨)

[البينة : ٥-٨]

Although they were enjoined only to worship Allah with sincere devotion to Him, being true in faith to Him alone, and to establish prayer and give zakah, and that is the true religion (5) Verily those who disbelieve among the People of the Book and among the polytheists will be in the fire of hell, to abide therein forever. It is they who are the worst of people (6) Verily those who believe and do righteous deeds - it is they who are the best of people (7) Their reward with their Lord is gardens of perpetual abode through which rivers flow, to abide therein forever and ever. Allah is pleased with them and

they are pleased with Him. That is for those who fear their Lord (8)

[Surah al-Bayyinah 98:5-8]

◆Imam as-Sa'di [may Allah have mercy on him] said:

{They were enjoined only to worship Allah with sincere devotion to Him} that is, in all their acts of worship, both outward and inward, to seek only the pleasure of Allah and to draw close to Him, **{being true in faith to Him alone}** and turning away from all religions that are contrary to the religion of pure monotheism.

Allah singles out prayer and *zakah* for mention, even though they are included in the words **{to worship Allah with sincere devotion to Him}**, because of their special virtue and because they are the two acts of worship which, if anyone undertakes them, he will undertake all other religious duties.

{and that} namely affirmation of the oneness of Allah and sincerity in religion **{is the true religion}** that is, the true religion which leads to the gardens of bliss, and all other religions are paths that lead to hell.

Then Allah mentions the requital of those who disbelieve after clear proof has come to them, as He says: **{Verily those who disbelieve among the People of the Book and among the polytheists will be in the fire of hell}** which will encompass them with its punishment, which will be severe indeed.

{to abide therein forever} the punishment will not be lightened for them, and they will be plunged into utter despair therein (43: 75).

{It is they who are the worst of people} because they learned about the truth but they ignored it, so they became losers in this world and the hereafter.

{Verily those who believe and do righteous deeds - it is they who are the best of people} because they worshipped Allah and learned who He is, and they attained bliss in this world and the hereafter.

{Their reward with their Lord is gardens of perpetual abode} that is, gardens in which they will settle, and will never move on or depart from them, and they will never seek anything better than them.

{through which rivers flow, to abide therein forever and ever. Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him}. He is pleased with them because of what they did of deeds that earn His pleasure, and they are pleased with Him because of what He has prepared for them of all kinds of honor and great reward.

{That} goodly reward is **{for those who fear their Lord}** that is, it is for those who fear Allah and refrain from disobeying Him, and who do their duty towards Him.

(147) Competition for worldly gain distracts you

قال الله تعالى

أَلْهَيْكُمْ التَّكَاثُرُ (١) حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ (٢)

[التكاثر : ١-٢]

Competition for worldly gain distracts you (1) until you come to your graves (2)

[Surah at-Takathur 102:1-2]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah says, rebuking His slaves for being distracted from that for which they were created of worshipping Him alone with no partner or associate, knowing Him and turning to Him, and giving precedence to love of Him over all other things:

{Competition for worldly gain distracts you} from what is mentioned above. What they compete in is not specified, so as to include everything that people compete to accumulate and boast about, such as accumulating wealth, children, supporters, troops, servants, status and other things that people usually compete with one another for, where the aim is not to sincerely seek the pleasure of Allah. Your heedlessness and distraction continue **{until you come to your graves}**, whereupon reality becomes clear to you, but that is after it has become impossible for you to rectify your situation.

(148) Surah al-'Asr

قال الله تعالى

وَالْعَصْرِ (١) إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ (٢) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ (٣)

[سورة العصر]

By Time (1) verily man is in a state of utter loss (2) except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and exhort one another to hold fast to the truth and exhort one another to be steadfast (3)

[Surah al-'Asr (103)]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah swears by Time, which is night and day, in which people's deeds take place, that every person is a loser, and loss is the opposite of success.

Loss is of various kinds: It may be absolute loss, as in the case of one who loses in this world and the hereafter, who misses out on bliss and deserves hellfire. Or he may be a loser in some ways but not others. Therefore, Allah describes everyone as a loser, except one who has the following **four** qualities:

- 1.** Belief in that which Allah has commanded us to believe in, and belief and faith cannot be sound unless they are based on knowledge, for faith is something that stems from knowledge and cannot be perfect without it.
- 2.** Righteous deeds, which include all good deeds, both outward and inward, having to do with duties towards Allah and towards His slaves, both obligatory and recommended.
- 3.** Exhorting one another to hold fast to the truth and do righteous deeds. That is, they exhort one another, urge one another and encourage one another to do that.
- 4.** Exhorting one another to be steadfast in obeying Allah, in refraining from disobedience towards Him, and in accepting the painful decrees of Allah.

By means of the first two one may perfect oneself, and by means of the last two one may help others to perfect themselves. By perfecting all four things one will be safe from loss and will attain great success.

(149) Surah al-Kawthar

قال الله تعالى

إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَكَ الْكَوْثَرَ (١) فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأَنْحَرْ (٢) إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ (٣)

[سورة الكوثر]

Verily We have granted you [O Muhammad] abundance (1)
so pray to your Lord and offer your sacrifice to Him alone (2)
Verily it is the one who hates you who is cut off [from all
goodness (3)]

[Surah al-Kawthar (108)]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

Here Allah says to His Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, reminding him of His favors to him: {**Verily We have granted you [O Muhammad] abundance [al-kawthar]**} that is, much goodness and great favors, among which is what Allah will grant to His Prophet ﷺ on the Day of Resurrection of the river which is called *al-Kawthar*.

He will also grant him the Cistern (*al-hawd*), the length of which is a month's journey, as is its width; its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey, and its vessels are like the stars of the sky in their number and brightness. Whoever takes one sip from it will never ever thirst again.

Having mentioned His favors to him, He commands him to give thanks for them, as He says:

{so pray to your Lord and offer your sacrifice to Him alone} these two acts of worship are singled out for mention, because they are among the best and greatest acts of worship that bring one closer to Allah.

In prayer one feels humility before Allah and shows it physically, for prayer demonstrates submission and servitude to Him.

In the case of sacrifice, one draws closer to Allah with the best quality of sacrificial animals that one possesses, giving wealth that one has a natural inclination to love and want to keep to oneself.

{Verily it is the one who hates you} that is, the one who despises you, criticizes you and shows disrespect towards you

{who is cut off [from all goodness]} for his deeds will cease and no one will remember him.

As for Muhammad ﷺ, he is the one who is perfect in the true sense of the word, who is to attain all that is possible of perfection in the case of a created being, such as high renown and large number of supporters and followers.

(150) Surah al-Ikhlās

قال الله تعالى

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ (١) اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ (٢) لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ (٣) وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ
كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ (٤)

[سورة الإخلاص]

Say [O Muhammad]: He, Allah, is One (1) Allah, Who is sought
by all (2) He begets not nor was He begotten (3) And there is
none comparable to Him (4)

[Surah al-Ikhlās (112)]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{Say [O Muhammad]} with certain faith, believing in it and
understanding its meaning:

{He, Allah, is One} that is, He is the One and unique, to
Whom alone belongs utmost perfection; to Him belong the most
beautiful names and perfect, sublime attributes, and His deeds
are far above any shortcomings; He has no counterpart and no
equal.

{Allah, Who is sought by all} to meet all needs. The
inhabitants of both the upper and lower realms are in the utmost
need of Him; they ask Him for what they need and turn to Him
regarding that which concerns them, because He is the only One

Who is perfect in His attributes, the All-Knowing Who is perfect in His knowledge, the Forbearing Who is perfect in His forbearance, the Most Merciful Who is perfect in His mercy, Whose mercy encompasses all things... and so on with all His attributes.

In His perfection, **{He begets not nor was He begotten}** because He is completely independent of means,

{and there is none comparable to Him} either in His names, attributes or deeds - blessed and exalted be He.

This *soorah* refers to the oneness of the divine names and attributes (*Tawheed al-Asma' was-Sifat*).

(151) Surah al-Falaq

قال الله تعالى

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ (١) مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ (٢) وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ
(٣) وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ (٤) وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ (٥)

[سورة الفلق]

Say [O Muhammad]: I seek refuge with the Lord of the rising dawn (1) from the harm [and mischief] of what He has created (2) from harm [and mischief] in the night when darkness grows intense (3) from the harm [and mischief] of those who blow upon knots (4) and from the harm [and mischief] of the envier when he envies (5)

[Surah al-Falaq (113)]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

{Say [O Muhammad]: I seek refuge} that is, I turn to and seek protection {with the Lord of the rising dawn} that is, the One Who causes dawn to break.

{from the harm [and mischief] of what He has created}. This includes all those whom Allah has created, humans, *jinn* and animals; one must seek refuge with their Creator from any harm or mischief that there may be in them.

Then He describes in specific terms what He has mentioned in general terms, as He says:

{from harm [and mischief] in the night when darkness grows intense} that is, from the harm and evil of what may happen in the night, when the darkness of night covers the earth and many evil spirits and harmful animals move about.

{from the harm [and mischief] of those who blow upon knots} that is, from the harm and mischief of witches who perform their witchcraft by blowing on knots that they tie for the purpose of casting spells.

{and from the harm [and mischief] of the envier when he envies}. The envier is the one who would like the blessing to be taken away from the one whom he envies, so he strives to cause it to be taken away by whatever means he can. Therefore, there is a need to seek refuge with Allah from his harm and mischief, and to foil his plan. The word translated here as **{envier}** also includes the one who puts the evil eye on others, because the evil eye only emanates from an envier who is evil in nature.

This *soorah* refers to seeking refuge with Allah from all kinds of evil and harm in both general and specific terms.

It indicates that magic or witchcraft is something real, the harm of which is to be feared, so one should seek refuge with Allah from it and from those who practice it.

(152) Surah an-Nas

قال الله تعالى

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ (١) مَلِكِ النَّاسِ (٢) إِلَهِ النَّاسِ (٣) مِنْ شَرِّ
الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ (٤) الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ (٥) مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ
وَالنَّاسِ (٦)

[سورة الناس]

Say [O Muhammad]: I seek refuge with the Lord of humankind
(1) the Sovereign of humankind (2) the God of humankind (3)
from the harm [and mischief] of the insidious whisperer (4)
who whispers into the hearts of humankind (5) from among
the jinn and humankind (6)

[Surah an-Nas (114)]

◆ Imam as-Sa'di [May Allah have mercy on him] said:

This *soorah* refers to seeking refuge with the Lord and God of humankind from the *Shaytan* who is the source and cause of all evil. In his efforts to tempt people and do evil, he whispers into their hearts, making evil fair-seeming to them and showing it to them in a good image, motivating them to do it.

And he makes goodness ill-seeming to them, tries to put them off it, and presents a false image of it to them. This is how

he always is, whispering and withdrawing; he retreats when a person remembers his Lord and seeks His help to ward him off.

So the individual should seek help, seek refuge and seek protection in the Lordship of Allah over all people, for He is the Lord of all people and all people come under His Lordship and Sovereignty, and He holds the forelock of every living being. And he should seek help, seek refuge and seek protection in the divinity of Allah, by worshipping Him, which is the purpose for which He has created them, and this purpose cannot be fulfilled except by warding off the evil of their enemy, who wants to cut them off and prevent them from worshipping Allah, and wants to make them among his party so that they will become inhabitants of the blazing fire.

Waswas (devilish whispers) may be caused by the *jinn* or by humans, hence Allah says: **{from among the jinn and humankind}**.

والله أعلم

وَصَلَّى اللّٰهُ وَسَلَّم عَلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ مُحَمَّدٍ، وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

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